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ABSTRACT

This report provides information about the schooling of over three million students in approximately 10,000 schools in Australia's eight states and territories during 1991. Chapter 1 describes the Australian Education Council and offers a national overview of schooling in Australia including the structure of schooling and how to achieve and support national goals. The chapter ends with 10 common and agreed national goals for schooling in Australia. The remaining eight chapters present comprehensive accounts of schooling in each state and territory: (1) New South Wales; (2) Victoria; (3) Queensland; (4) South Australia; (5) Western Australia; (6) Tasmania; (7) Northern Territory; and (8) Australian Capital Territory. The Commonwealth plays a key role in order to address national priorities for Australian schools and to facilitate cooperative efforts among Australian educational authorities. The final chapter describes the Commonwealth's involvement in schooling, major developments during 1991, social justice initiatives, Commonwealth programs for schools, and income support for students. (CK)

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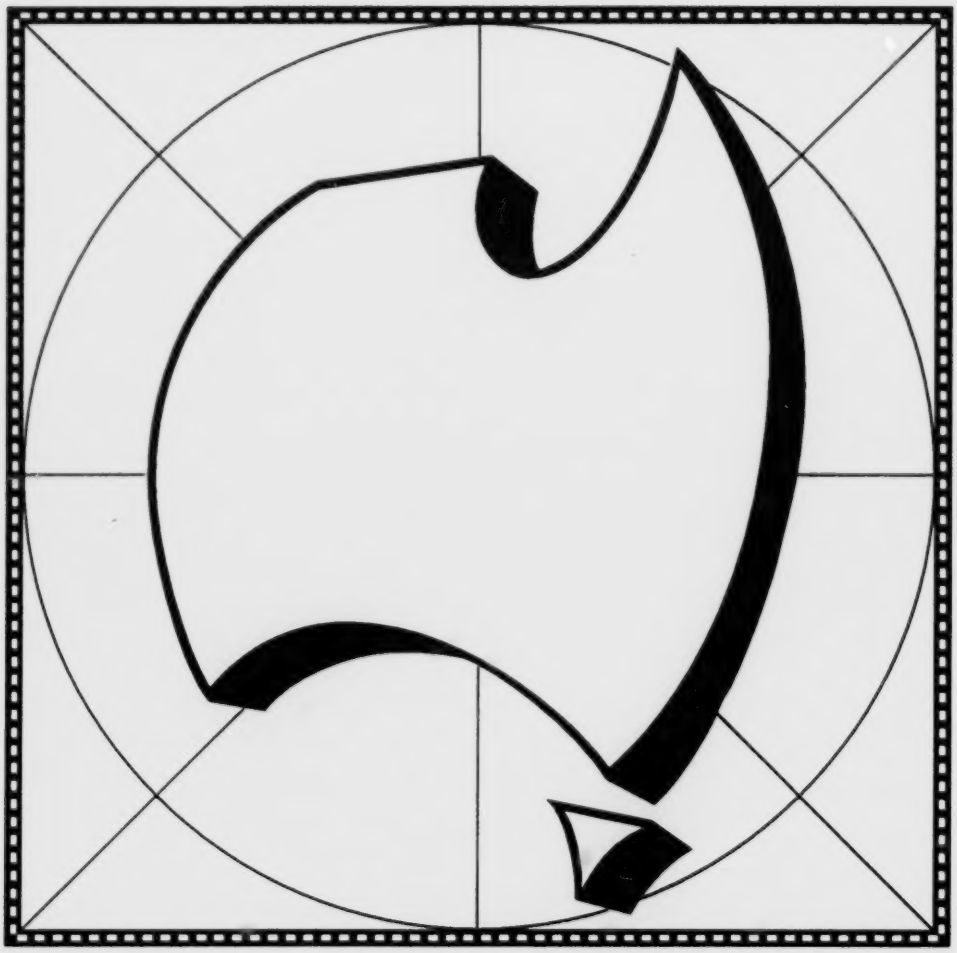
NATIONAL REPORT ON SCHOOLING IN AUSTRALIA



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PREFACE

In April 1989 the State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers responsible for education, meeting as the Australian Education Council, made a historic decision in relation to the provision of information on the expenditure of public money on education. Previously, States and Territories had reported individually to the Commonwealth Government through a plethora of resource agreements. In April 1989 it was agreed that such accountability requirements would be met better by an annual national report. This report would provide, in an accessible and readable form; a comprehensive account of schooling to the nation. A single audit certificate would suffice to meet specific Commonwealth financial accountability requirements.

This reporting arrangement was conditional upon the development of an agreed national framework. The framework, as it has evolved through the pilot report for 1989 and the 1990 report, has placed particular emphasis on progress towards the achievement of the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia, with reporting on selected priority areas. State and Territory participation in national sample studies of key schooling initiatives is also an important contribution to the national reporting exercise. The development of national statistical data is a key feature of national reporting and a statistical annex constitutes a second volume to the report.

Initially, reporting by the non-government sector was negotiated by the Commonwealth, with the expectation that ultimately such schools would meet educational accountability requirements through the national report on schooling. Hence, for 1991, Catholic schools have reported in cooperation with their State systems, according to the agreed framework. Most non-Catholic schools have reported through the Commonwealth, with the exception of non-Catholic schools in South Australia, which reported through the State department. This practice is expected to develop in other States in the coming years.

This third annual national report provides commentary on the operation of school systems, priority objectives, the participation of students in schooling including equity initiatives, areas of student learning, student outcomes, teaching and learning and the application of financial resources to schools. Important new national, State, Territory and Commonwealth initiatives in schooling are highlighted. A major aim of the report is to raise public awareness of schooling in Australia by providing a comprehensive and authoritative source of information. At the same time, the contents of the report and the statistical annex provide an avenue for satisfying the legal requirements for the Federal Government to account for the expenditure of Commonwealth funds on schooling.

State and Territory and Commonwealth Ministers with responsibilities for schooling:

	As at June 1991	As at June 1992
New South Wales	The Hon Virginia Chadwick MP	The Hon Virginia Chadwick MP
Victoria	The Hon Barry Pullen MP	The Hon Neil Pope MP
Queensland	The Hon Paul Braddy MLA	The Hon Paul Braddy MLA
South Australia	The Hon Greg Crafter MP	The Hon Greg Crafter MP
Western Australia	The Hon Kay Hallahan MLA	The Hon Kay Hallahan MLA
Tasmania	The Hon Michael Aird MHA	The Hon John Beswick MHA
Northern Territory	The Hon Shane Stone MLA	The Hon Shane Stone MLA
ACT	Mr Bill Wood MLA	Mr Bill Wood MLA
Commonwealth	The Hon John Dawkins MP	The Hon Kim Beazley MP

The Chair of the Australian Education Council in 1991 was the Hon Greg Crafter MP, SA Minister for Education; and until October 1992, the Hon Neil Pope MP, Victorian Minister of School Education. In October 1992 the Hon Don Hayward MLA, Victorian Minister of Education, became Chair.

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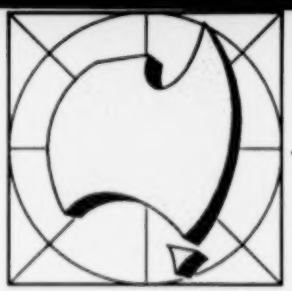
NATIONAL OVERVIEW



Introduction

The purpose of the *National Report on Schooling 1991* is to inform the Australian people about the schooling that was provided during 1991 to over three million students in approximately 10,000 schools in Australia's eight States and Territories.

This chapter offers a national overview of schooling in Australia. Progress towards achieving the national goals for schooling through national collaboration in curriculum is a continuing highlight of the *Report*, with particular emphasis for 1991 on the student learning areas of mathematics and English. Progress towards the national goals aiming at making learning more accessible and more equitable focuses this year on initiatives to improve the educational participation and attainment of girls. Subsequent chapters provide information on the role of the Commonwealth and a more detailed account of schooling provision and educational initiatives in each State and Territory. (Note: the term 'State' is used hereafter to refer to 'State and Territory'.)

Australia has two sectors of schooling: a government and a non-government sector. Constitutional responsibility for school education lies with State governments, which have responsibility for providing education to all children of school age, of whatever physical and intellectual ability, social and economic circumstances, cultural background and beliefs. Parents, however, have the right to choose non-government schooling for their children and many do so for educational, religious, cultural or other reasons. While the main focus of this year's report continues to be on the government sector, each chapter also reports on schooling provision by the non-government sector. As has been indicated in the preface, by a process of evolution the information which is provided to this report by the non-government sector, structured according to the agreed framework, will come to fulfil the educational accountability requirements of the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training.

Responsibility for schooling in Australia

Under the federal system of government in Australia, responsibility for Australian schooling is shared between the six States, the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory and the Commonwealth.

State ministers of education have constitutional responsibility for primary and secondary schooling. They are responsible for the provision of schooling to all students of school age in their State. Each State administers and provides substantial funding for its own system of primary and secondary schooling. These duties are exercised through government departments which are responsible to ministers. In regard to government schools, the States are responsible for policies and processes in the areas of school and teacher registration, teacher employment, student enrolment, curriculum content, course accreditation and student assessment. State education departments recruit and appoint the teachers in government schools, supply buildings, equipment and materials, and provide discretionary funding for use by schools. However, during 1991 the beginnings of a movement towards devolution of some of these responsibilities from departmental level to the school level has been taking place in some systems. In addition to these general policy responsibilities, all States have developed equity policies and programs which aim to provide quality schooling for all students in the State, irrespective of their social background or their geographic location.

Responsibility for the Commonwealth role in schooling is exercised by the Commonwealth Minister for Employment, Education and Training. The Commonwealth Government provides significant supplementary finance to the States and to non-government schools. In addition, the Commonwealth plays an important national role in considering the broad purposes and structures of schooling, and in promoting national consistency and coherence in the provision of schooling across Australia. In cooperation with the States, the Commonwealth addresses resource, equity and quality issues through its general recurrent, capital and specific purpose programs. In addition, it has specific responsibilities for migrants and Aboriginal people, the provision of financial assistance to students, and Australia's international relations in education. The Commonwealth government also has direct responsibility for schooling in Australia's external territories of Christmas Island, the Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Norfolk Island.

The Australian Education Council: national cooperation in schooling

The Australian Education Council (AEC), established in 1936, is the forum for national collaboration in policy development and implementation relating to all levels of education in Australia. The council comprises the State and Commonwealth ministers for education. New Zealand became a full member in 1991 and Papua New Guinea is an associate member.

Ministers whose portfolios include school education are responsible for both government and non-government schools. The council, as a matter of principle, has established a range of consultative mechanisms at both Federal and State levels to obtain the views of the non-government school sector and, whenever possible, extends membership of its working parties and committees to the peak national bodies representing the non-government employing authorities—the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) and the National Council of Independent Schools' Associations (NCISA).

Regular consultation also takes place with peak national bodies representing:

- parents—the Australian Council of State Schools Organisations (ACSSO) and the Australian Parents Council (APC), representing government and non-government school parents, respectively;
- teachers—the Australian Teachers Union (ATU) and the Independent Teachers Federation of Australia (ITFA), representing government and non-government school teachers, respectively;
- the business sector—the National Industry Education Forum (representing a range of peak industry bodies including the Business Council of Australia (BCA), the Confederation of Australian Industry (CAI) and the Australian Chamber of Manufactures).

Two national research and development companies, partly or wholly funded by Commonwealth and State ministers of education, facilitate cooperative initiatives in schooling:

- the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), founded in 1930, which undertakes, promotes, disseminates and markets research and development projects, including educational and psychological tests;
- the Curriculum Corporation (CC), which in 1990 commenced full operation in the development and publication of curriculum materials resulting from national collaboration, and is managed by a board comprising representatives from the government and non-government sectors and parent and teacher organisation.

The Australian Education Council meets at least twice a year, although additional special meetings are held as necessary. Its ongoing work is undertaken through a system of standing committees and working parties. It is supported by a small secretariat, funded by all governments and located in Melbourne.

The agenda of the Australian Education Council in 1991 was dominated by initiatives associated with the post-compulsory years of schooling, with ongoing activity in national cooperation in curriculum.

The following activities summarise the national collaborative initiatives. During 1991 the AEC:

- produced a major report on young people's participation in post-compulsory education and training (the Finn Report, described in greater detail on page 6);
- established a steering committee (the Mayer Committee) to further develop work on employment related key competencies in curriculum as recommended in the Finn Report;
- supported the Effective Schools Project and the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning;
- established a working party, as required by the Special Premiers' Conference, to examine roles and responsibilities of Federal and State levels of government and to advise on appropriate future structures and funding arrangements;
- monitored the implementation of the Australian Language and Literacy Policy through its working party established in late 1990;
- confirmed the framework for national collaboration in curriculum development in eight agreed key learning areas;
- released *A National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools*, as a framework upon which systems and schools may build their mathematics curriculum in years K–12;
- continued developmental work on subject profiles in the areas of mathematics and English as a means of monitoring student progress, and commenced work on the development of statements and profiles in the remaining key learning areas;
- commissioned a survey of girls' attitudes to schooling in Australia in 1991 to inform the review of the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools;
- established a working party to examine

commercial sponsorship and promotion in schools;

- established a cross-sectoral working party on a national communications framework for educational delivery;
- established a national database of job and course information to assist students in career choice;
- continued the development of a nationally agreed statement on career education;
- continued the publication of nationally agreed statistics on schooling in collaboration with the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The structure of schooling in Australia

The first *National Report on Schooling in Australia* (1989) contained detailed information on the social and economic context and the structure of schooling. It was decided not to repeat all of this information each year, but to compile the detailed data in a *Statistical Annex* companion volume. The *Statistical Annex* will be made available on request to education researchers and writers and other interested persons.

Of the two broad sectors of schooling in Australia, government schools, which enrol the large majority of students, operate under the direct responsibility of State education ministers. Non-government schools, which operate under conditions determined by government registration authorities, are required to provide certain minimum education standards and satisfactory premises. Almost all non-government schools have some religious affiliation, most commonly with the Catholic Church (70 per cent of non-government students are enrolled in Catholic schools). Each State has a substantial system of Catholic schools. About 850 non-government schools are independent, that is, they do not belong to a system.

The structure of primary and secondary schooling in Australia varies between the different States and Territories. There are three basic patterns evident, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Schooling is compulsory from ages 6 to 15 (age 16 in Tasmania). In most States, though, children start primary school at around the age of five when they enrol in a preparatory or kindergarten year. After the preparatory year, primary education lasts for either six or seven years, depending on the State concerned (see Figure 1). In 1991 there were 1.79 million primary school students, of whom 75 per cent were enrolled in government schools. The scattered rural population in most States has necessitated a large number of very small primary schools, although this number is declining. All government primary schools and most non-government primary schools are coeducational.

Figure 1. The structure of primary and secondary schooling in Australia

Level	*NSW, VIC., TAS., ACT*	*SA, NT*	*QLD., WA*
Year 12	SECONDARY	SECONDARY	SECONDARY
Year 11			
Year 10			
Year 9			
Year 8			
Year 7		PRIMARY	PRIMARY
Year 6	PRIMARY		
Year 5			
Year 4			
Year 3			
Year 2			
Year 1			
Pre-year 1			

Pre-year 1 is called Kindergarten in NSW and ACT and Preparatory in Vic. and Tas.

Pre-year 1 is called Reception in SA and Transition in NT

Secondary education is available for either five or six years, depending upon the length of primary school in the State concerned. Students normally commence secondary school at about age 12. In 1991 there were 1.29 million full-time students enrolled in secondary schools, of whom 68 per cent were in government schools. Most government secondary schools are coeducational, but a significant number of non-government secondary schools are single sex.

These historical differences in the organisational structures of Australia's school systems cause problems for Australia's increasingly mobile student population. Since 1989, education ministers have worked to minimise problems associated with differences in year levels and nomenclature. To assist these efforts, the Special Premiers' Conference in 1991 established a working party on complementarity issues to achieve a more supportive environment for students moving interstate.

Features of the structure of Australian schooling in 1991 were as follows:

- There were 9,880 schools in Australia, which represented a decline of 27 or 0.3 per cent since 1990.
- Seventy-one per cent of the schools were primary schools, 16 per cent were secondary schools, 8 per cent were combined primary and secondary schools and 4 per cent were special schools.

- There were 3,075,137 full-time students in Australian schools. This was an increase of 33,480 in student numbers, or 1.1 per cent, since 1990. Primary numbers increased by slightly more (1.3 per cent) than student numbers in secondary schools (0.9 per cent).
- Just over 72 per cent of full-time students in Australia attended government schools, the same proportion as in 1990. The respective proportions for primary, junior secondary and senior secondary government school enrolments were 75 per cent, 69 per cent and 67 per cent.
- The total number of teaching and non-teaching staff employed in Australian schools was 246,359 (in full-time equivalents), which represented an increase of 1,941 or 0.8 per cent since 1990.
- There were 199,532 teaching staff (in full-time equivalents) employed in Australian schools, which represented an increase of 318 or 0.2 per cent since 1990.
- The average number of students per teaching staff member was 15.2 in government schools and 16.0 in non-government schools; for all schools the ratios for primary and secondary schools were 18.5 and 12.5 respectively, which were slight increases over the ratios for 1990.
- Just under 74 per cent of teaching staff in primary schools were female, as were just over 50 per cent of teaching staff in secondary schools. Both ratios represent slight increases since 1990.
- Among non-teaching staff in 1991, 79 per cent were female, which was a slight increase over the equivalent proportion in 1990.

Achieving the national goals

Excellence and equity

Retention rates to year 12

In the ten years from 1982 to 1991, the percentage of each cohort of young people reaching year 12, as measured by the apparent retention rate from the first to final year of secondary school, almost doubled. In 1982 the apparent retention rate to year 12 was 36 per cent and in 1991 the rate was 71 per cent (DEET 1991; ABS 1992). The group of young people who reached year 12 in 1991 began secondary school as year 7 students in 1986 (in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania or ACT) or year 8 students in 1987 (in Queensland, SA, WA or NT). A small percentage (3 per cent) of this cohort left school before year 10, a further 16 per cent left after year 10, 10 per cent left after year 11 and the majority (71 per cent) remained to year 12.

Research by ACER undertaken for the Finn Report (see page 6) and by the Economic and Policy Analysis Division of DEET into key aspects of retention rates is summarised under each of the subheadings which follows.

Table 1. Key features of Australian schooling, 1991

	Government	*Non-government*	*Total*
Schools	7,470	2,510	9,980
Students (full-time)	2,217,226	857,911	3,075,137
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	64,061	8,190	72,251
Full-fee paying overseas students	1,096	5,892	6,988
Staff (in schools)	178,937	67,422	246,359
Teachers (in schools)	145,895	53,637	199,532
Expenditure (1990–91) (government schools)	$9,492m	n.a.	n.a.
Apparent retention rates			
Males	61.5%	77.2%	66.1%
Females	72.7%	86.0%	76.7%
Persons	66.9%	81.6%	71.3%
Participation rates			
16-year-olds			80.3%
17-year-olds			56.9%
Pupil–teacher ratios			
Primary	18.0	19.9	18.5
Secondary	12.3	13.2	12.5

See *Statistical Annex* for details underlying these figures.

Gender

Since 1971 young females have participated in the post-compulsory years of school to a greater extent than young males (see Table 9(A) in *Statistical Annex*). The gain, over the last twenty years, in female retention to year 12 was 48 percentage points to 76.7 per cent, compared to that for males of 30 percentage points to 66.1 per cent.

Factors traditionally accounting for this difference are the greater numbers of males entering apprenticeship training and TAFE courses after year 10 (Sturman and Long, 1990) and the better employment opportunities for young males leaving year 10 (McKenzie and Alford, 1992).

Socioeconomic background

While socioeconomic disadvantage continued to be a factor in completing schooling, there was a significant increase in the year 12 completion rates for students from low SES (socioeconomic status) backgrounds in 1991. The rate increased to 61 per cent, up from 53 per cent in 1990. The gap in year 12 completion rates for students from low and high SES backgrounds has remained fairly constant over the past five years. See Table 11(A) in the *Statistical Annex*.

Non-English speaking background

Overall, the research evidence indicates that young people of non-English speaking background complete year 12 in greater proportions than other young people although within this general pattern there can be variations between different ethnic groups. In the late 1980s about 54 per cent of Australian background students completed year 12 compared to 60 per cent of those from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Rural locations

The difference in year 12 completion rates for urban and rural localities has all but disappeared over the past five years. In 1991, year 12 completion rates for these groups of students were 70 per cent and 68 per cent, respectively. However the gap in completion rates between students living in remote areas (52 per cent in 1991) and those in urban and rural locations is widening. See Table 11(B) in the *Statistical Annex*.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in post-compulsory schooling is substantially lower than that for other Australians. While retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to year 12 has risen more rapidly in the 1980s, it is estimated to be still only half the size of the retention rate for the population as a whole.

Low earlier school achievement

Students with low levels of earlier school achievement are less likely to reach year 12. Analyses from the ACER Youth in Transition Study indicate that the level of earlier school achievement is the most powerful influence on year 12 participation.

Age participation in Australian schools

Trends in age participation rates from 1972 to 1991 show that the greatest contributions to increased participation in schooling have been from the 16-year-olds (from 53 to 80 per cent) and 17-year-olds (from 30 to 57 per cent), with most of these increases taking place after 1982. Even though participation among 15-year-olds is extremely high, there is a group of some 7 per cent of this age group who are not in the regular school system.

Education of girls

Australian schools, as a matter of national policy, have accepted some of the responsibility for realising the wider social objective of the equal participation of women and men in all aspects of economic, social and political life. Schools and school systems publicly subscribe to a common set of principles and values encapsulated in Commonwealth and State legislation and in system and school policy statements, the most notable being the 1987 National Policy for the Education of Girls, currently under its first five-yearly review.

These various policy statements reflect the ideas and ideals that guide teachers and schools in their work. In line with these ideals, schools should:

- not limit students' participation in learning because of their gender;
- ensure that girls and boys are valued equally in schooling;
- reflect the right of girls to personal respect, economic independence in adulthood and participation in decisions which affect their lives;
- ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for productive careers in the paid workforce and in the home;
- assist students to recognise and understand the contribution of women to society;
- be a socially, culturally and physically comfortable environment for girls' learning to take place.

Review of the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools

In 1991 the AEC Committee to Review the National Policy for the Education of Girls began work on evaluating the effectiveness of the original five-year policy and determining new objectives and strategies to improve the quality of schooling for girls. To inform this work, the committee commissioned a nationwide study of the attitudes of schoolgirls themselves towards the extent to which these policy ideals are being met in Australia's schools. The working paper, *Listening to Girls*, also recorded the views of the girls' parents, teachers and administrators, as a context for analysis.

The committee has also been specifically requested by Council to examine girls' subject choices as a likely area for supportive policy intervention (refer to Table 12 in the *Statistical Annex*). This investigation will be undertaken early in 1992, to be followed by the preparation and circulation for nationwide consultation of a draft national action plan containing proposals for new priorities, implementation strategies and performance indicators for the next five years. Following consideration of the responses, the committee will submit the draft national action plan to Council for endorsement later in 1992.

Equity in Senior Secondary School Assessment Project (ESSA)

In December 1991 the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA), in cooperation with the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA), commenced work on the ESSA Project, which is funded by the Commonwealth as a Project of National Significance. The project will investigate equity issues in patterns of student performance in selected subjects at the senior secondary level, with a view to establishing the implications of this research for both policy and practice in curriculum and assessment. The findings of the project will be included in the *National Report* for 1992.

General and vocational education

The Finn Report

The AEC's Committee on Young People's Participation in Post-Compulsory Education and Training was established in 1990. Membership of the committee was drawn from the school and TAFE sectors, the Commonwealth, the business community and the trade union movement, with an independent chair, Mr Brian Finn, Managing Director of IBM Australia. The committee presented its final report in August 1991. The Finn Report reflected a historic agreement by ministers that 'Australia, as a nation, should be committed to providing for all of its young people a

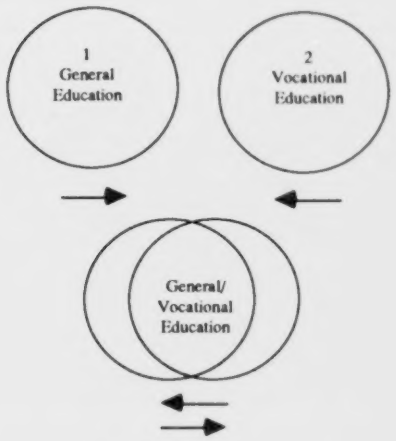
Some of the views which girls expressed in the consultation process, as they were analysed in the working paper:

- Sex-based harassment is a typical aspect of coeducational school life, having the effect of making girls passive and docile; restricting their access to space, equipment and the attention of the teachers; and undermining their feelings of safety, self-confidence and worth.
- Traditional teacher-dominated classroom practices tend to alienate girls, who prefer more participative, cooperative and student-controlled approaches to learning;
- Single-sex environments are good for girls' engagement with learning but are not always favoured by girls who value the opportunities for ongoing contact with boys as preparation for adult life.
- Girls' subject choices are influenced and restricted by gender factors so that in the areas currently offering the widest range of future career opportunities — technology, science and mathematics — girls are not participating equally with boys.
- Curriculum and assessment often alienates and disadvantages girls by its traditional bias towards masculine values, including lack of substantive support for personal relatonships, which girls value highly.
- Girls' career aspirations are often confused by competing expectations in relation to family and childrearing, and girls are often poorly informed about the many new career opportunities likely in the future and the new models for blending family and career.
- Schools are sometimes insufficiently flexible, attentive or positive as a learning environment for those girls whose lives may be dominated by domestic responsibilities, violence and abuse, pregnancy and motherhood, or whose backgrounds are not 'typical white, middle-class urban'.
- School culture often reinforces gender stereotypes which undermine girls' perceptions of their appearance, achievements, successes, competence and talents; and which encourage boys to treat girls as inferiors.
- School facilities are not always adequate to girls' needs for privacy and uncontested spaces for sport and relaxation.

One teacher's account of her experience of the introduction of single-sex classes in Year 9:

> We introduced single-sex maths classes because we thought boys were getting more air-space than girls. We thought the boys' class would be more of a discipline problem than the girls' class and that did prove to be so ... but it went beyond that. I found it a lot easier to do group work and to have discussions in the girls' class. They were more prepared to explore the whys and hows. The boys just want to be told, quickly, so they can get on with it. Discipline in the boys' class has to be short, sharp, tough, to get results. For the girls you have to negotiate more, be scrupulously fair, let them discuss things and chat or they'll sulk for days. I really enjoyed the challenge of that girls' class. I felt I could use a wider repertoire of my unused teaching skills.
>
> (Milligan and Thomson, 1992)

'General vocational education'



One circle represents general comprehensive education, the other represents vocational education. The growing intersection of the two is logically termed 'general vocational' education. 'General vocational' education could therefore be defined broadly as those aspects of general education which are important for employment, or alternatively as those aspects of vocational education which are important for active citizenship.

This concept of an overlap between general and vocational education can be illustrated with reference to the ten common and agreed national goals for schooling in Australia [see page iv]. Certainly goals 1, 2, 4, 5, most of 6, and 10 fall into this area of overlap between general and vocational education, as do some aspects of the other goals.

> This view implies that both schools and TAFE will need to change—schools to become more concerned with issues of employability and the provision of broad vocational education; and TAFE to recognise that initial vocational courses must increasingly be concerned with competencies that are more general.
>
> *Finn Report*, 1991, Vol 1, pp 7–8

program of education/training which prepares them for life as individuals, citizens and workers, now, through the current decade and into the coming century'. As such, the Finn Report constitutes a watershed stage in education and training reform for young Australians in the 1990s.

The Finn Committee consulted very widely and generated an unprecedented level of public interest. All States and Territories were involved to some degree in provision of information and advice to the committee. Expert advice was commissioned on access and equity issues in relation to participation, and on the resourcing implications. Information from relevant developments overseas was also drawn upon, including findings from an OECD seminar on linkages in vocational–technical education and training held in Arizona in March 1992.

Among the main Finn Report recommendations endorsed by ministers which related to schooling were:

- Nearly all young people should undertake sufficient post-compulsory school education or training to complete year 12 or some other initial post-school qualification.
- Easier movement should be possible between school and workforce-entry training.
- Governments should guarantee two years of full-time education or training after year 10, either by encouraging full retention to year 12 or providing a number of options after year 10.
- School programs should incorporate key employment-related competencies, with reporting of student achievement in key competencies to be compatible across education sectors.

The Finn Committee identified six key areas of competency required by young people in their preparation for employment:

- language and communication;
- mathematics;
- scientific and technological understanding;
- cultural understanding;
- problem solving;
- personal and interpersonal characteristics.

The Mayer Committee on key employment-related competencies

In August 1991 the AEC established a committee to undertake further development of these competencies. The committee, chaired by Mr Eric Mayer, former Chair of the Board of National Mutual Life Association, was comprised of school and TAFE representatives from all States and Territories, the non-government sector, the National Training Board and teacher unions at both school and TAFE levels.

The Mayer Committee was established in order to further develop key competencies identified by the Finn Committee. The committee began a process of consulting widely

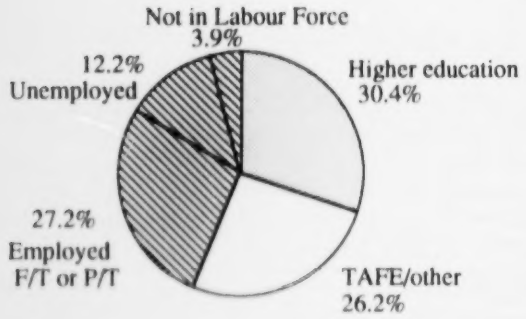
to determine the feasibility of developing a national framework for assessing and reporting on employment-related key competencies. It is expected to report to the AEC and the ministers of vocational education, employment and training (MOVEET) during the second half of 1992.

New national targets

The Finn Committee suggested that a set of national targets of participation and attainment be established. These should apply to post-compulsory education and training within schools, higher education, TAFE and other training. The ministers noted that further work on these would be done by the Employment and Skills Formation Council (ESFC) of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training. Dr Laurie Carmichael, Chair of ESFC, is to report on this work in 1992.

As Figure 2 shows, almost 57 per cent of students aged 15 to 19 who left school in 1990 were placed in tertiary education in 1991. This means 43 per cent of young people were not currently working towards a further education or training qualification. The employment opportunities for this group of young people in the future will be very limited. Hence, this is the group which is the target of the work of the Finn Committee and of the ESFC review of entry level training.

Figure 2. Students aged 15–19 who left school in 1990: where they were in 1991



Source: Statistical Annex 1991, Table 13, based on ABS *Transition from Education to Work*, Cat. No. 6227.0

The labour market relevance of secondary schooling

A nationally representative sample of 436 respondents drawn from the ACER Youth in Transition study was surveyed by mail questionnaire and group interviews were held with former year 12 students from 12 case study schools in three States. Students sampled considered that:

- a major reason for enrolling in year 12 was 'It would help me get a better job';
- year 12 completers were working in jobs with higher status and higher incomes than were those who left with year 10 or 11;
- existing subjects in the senior curriculum should be reoriented to increase their relevance, e.g. the basics of spelling, punctuation and letter writing needed higher priority, and there should be more emphasis on self-expression and the ability to argue coherently;
- student–teacher relationships could be improved to assist development of self-confidence and maturity;
- teaching methods should encourage self-directed learning, working with others and goal-setting techniques;
- more 'real' work experience should be available;
- there should be better provision of career information and advice on a wider range of occupations.

(McKenzie, 1991; McKenzie and Alford, 1992)

Career education

During 1991 the AEC Working Party on Career Education undertook the development of a national statement on career education in Australian schools, including a statement on national goals for career education, desirable outcomes for students, schools and systems, and appropriate evaluative arrangements. The working party also sought to identify key nationwide issues vital to the achievement of effective career education outcomes, and to review the roles and responsibilities of all the relevant parties involved in the delivery of career education. The working party was chaired by the Commonwealth and was comprised of representatives from all States and Territories from all school systems and some TAFE authorities and the Australian Vice Chancellors Committee (AVCC). An NBEET representative participated as an observer, and from September representatives from the NCEC and the NCISA joined as members.

This work of national collaboration in career education was undertaken in close contact with the national curriculum collaboration and the NBEET/BCA National Forum on Career Education and Career Advisory Services. The working party both contributed to and commented on the Finn Report, *Young People's Participation in Post-Compulsory Education and Training*.

A wide range of groups, including industry interest groups was consulted on a draft statement, with particular support indicated for nationwide consistency of implementation. The responses from the national consultations were to be incorporated in the final draft of the statement, due to be submitted to ministers early in 1992.

The national database of career information

As reported in 1990, a National Database Management Committee was established to oversee a computerised information database for careers education and related purposes. The committee was charged with implementing the sharing of summary interstate data and developing standard data conventions and data collection agreements.

In response to advice from the Database Management Committee, education ministers agreed that the Job and Course Explorer (JAC) system should be adopted for the development of the national database on accredited courses and jobs.

Most of the committee's work during 1991 involved the development of implementation details, preparation of software licence agreements and formal arrangements for ministerial agreements for the operation of the national database.

The national database is expected to become fully operational in 1992 and further details will be reported in next year's *National Report*.

Areas of student learning

In the national overview chapter of the *National Report on Schooling in Australia* 1990, a detailed analysis was provided of the initial implementation of the national goals adopted by the Australian Education Council in April 1989. Each of the State chapters in this year's report charts in some detail progress on achievement of the goals in 1991. In this chapter, particular national initiatives are highlighted.

National collaboration in curriculum

The major national collaborative effort in curriculum development was continued during 1991, coordinated by the establishment in August of an AEC Curriculum and Assessment Committee with up to two nominees of each State, Territory and Commonwealth minister responsible for school education, representatives of the National Catholic Education Commission, the National Council of Independent Schools' Associations, New Zealand and the associated organisations: the Curriculum Corporation and the Australian and New Zealand Councils of Educational Research.

Among its management functions, it was agreed that the Curriculum and Assessment Committee would establish, where appropriate, curriculum project teams, steering committees and reference groups.

The committee was also asked to ensure that adequate consultation is undertaken within each State participating in a particular project team, and between non-participating States and the project teams.

The committee established a three-stage approach to the development of national statements and profiles in each of the key learning areas. In essence, the three stages involve:

1 the preparation of a brief defining the learning area and directing the writing of the statement and profile (this did not apply to the first four areas which had passed beyond the stage of a brief being prepared prior to the committee's establishment);

2 the writing of a statement which identifies the content of the curriculum and provides a conceptual framework for the further development of curriculum;

3 the writing of profiles which identify a small number of strands for each learning area as a basis for reporting student achievement.

The following table describes the proposed timelines for each statement as at the end of 1991.

Learning Area	Brief	Statement	Profile
Mathematics	n.a.	Published	Mid 1992
English	n.a.	Mid-1992	Sept 1992
Science	n.a.	Mid-1992	Early 1993
Technology	n.a.	Mid-1992	End 1992
Studies of Society and the Environment	Mid-1992	Early1993	Mid-1993
Health	Mid-1992	Mid-1993	Mid-1993
Languages other than English	Mid-1992	Mid-1993	Mid-1993
The arts	Mid-1992	Mid-1993	Mid-1993

National statements

The development of national statements and profiles for the arts, languages other than English and health (including physical education and personal development) was agreed to by AEC in 1991, bringing the number of areas for collaborative development to eight.

The national statements are designed to expand upon the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia (known as the 'national goals'). They are not subjects but are designed to act as a national resource to be used for further course and syllabus development at the system and school levels. They define a given area of learning, outline its essential elements and show what is distinctive to an area. The major aspects of the learning area are organised into strands which are then described across four bands ranging from early primary to upper secondary schooling. Statements are not designed to correspond to any particular curriculum structure. Rather, they will be used by education systems and schools at the local level to guide further curriculum development, including course development, and by education systems working collaboratively at the national level for further curriculum development, including resource development.

National profiles

Profiles consist of a series of descriptive statements of learning outcomes for each of the learning areas. They are arranged in eight levels and describe outcomes for each of the key elements of the learning area. The outcomes describe in progressive order of difficulty the skills and knowledge that students need to acquire to become proficient in the area. The profiles will be supported by exemplars which will provide typical illustrations of achievement at particular levels of the profile (see page 11).

The profiles are built upon the work already undertaken in this area in a number of States and Territories. They are designed to provide a set of common indicators or pointers for measuring and reporting student learning outcomes. They are not assessment systems or packages. Systems and schools will continue to design and use their own assessment methods. Profiles, like the national statements, are designed to provide a set of common reference points by describing a set of common learning outcomes and providing examples of student work which demonstrate these outcomes.

Profiles in mathematics and English are currently being developed and will be completed during 1992, with the six further areas being completed over the next two years.

This chapter will concentrate on mathematics and English, the two areas in which most developmental progress has been made.

Mathematics

The key initiative in mathematics nationally was the distribution of *A National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools*. The *National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools* provides a framework around which States and schools may build their mathematics curriculum. It identifies important components of a mathematics education for the great majority of students. It documents areas of agreement between education systems about directions in school mathematics, the principles which should inform curriculum development, and the extent and range of school mathematics. It does not define a syllabus, nor does it place limits or restrictions on the scope of the mathematics curriculum or on the range of teaching strategies adopted.

Figure 3. An extract from the *National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools*, Section 7, Choosing and using mathematics: the essential features of mathematical modelling

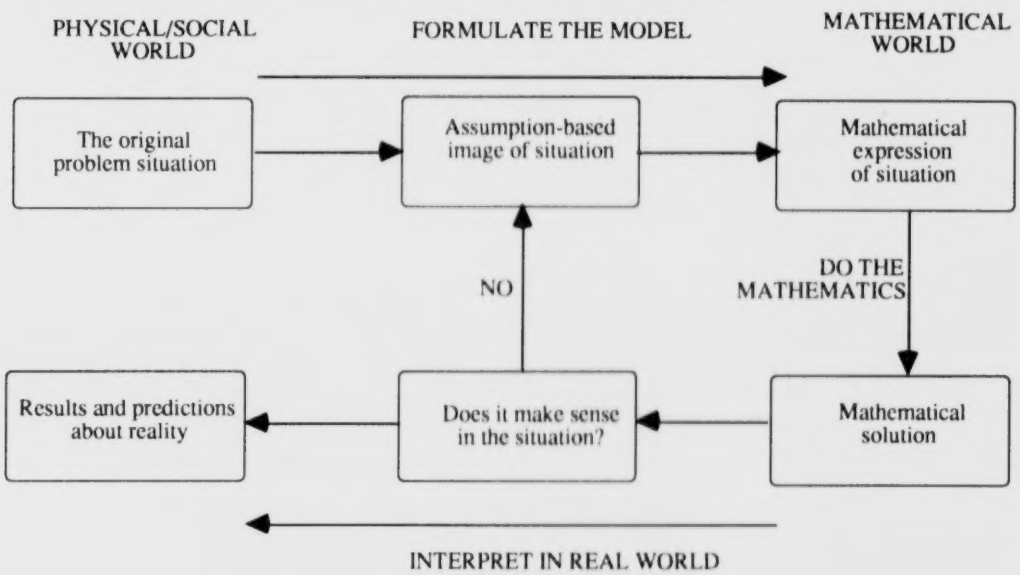


Figure 4. Example of English Profile

a. Planning guide

GATHERING IDEAS

My topic: I think Cats Should be kept In

My own point of view on my topic: All cats should be made stay out the back of their own house

My intended audience: my Neighbours

The form of writing I will use: letter
(letter, magazine article, newspaper article, speech)

Possible points to support my argument:
They keep you awake
They chase your own kittens
Cats like ripping your rubbish bag up
They eat your kittens food
All cats should be desexed

Possible points against my argument:
Other people might like cats
they might not have an owner. (stray)
Their owners may not feed them.

Notes and useful ideas from talks with other people:
They live up in the tin loft
They won't get as many deasesses.
They go into sheds and wee every where and it smells & revolting.
They live and wee in your boat car, etc

b. Organisation guide

ORGANISING MY WRITING

opening sentance: ripping rubbish; the smell of ther wee; they keep you awake; Cats should stay in thier own home

lesser points: They keep you awake; chase and fight with other cats; the desexing of cats; make thier houses in your boots trailer etc.

points against it: they are cute pets (but if they are such cute pets why let them roam and fight); they might not have an owner (R S P C A); thier owners may not feed them.

conclusion: I think that you should do something about this strong complaint because I can tell you it's not only me that has this problem, it's about 4 families in ~~5 this~~ of our neighbourhood.

The chief Exective Officer
District Council

c. Draft

[student's address given here]

The Chief Executive Officer
District Council

SA

Dear Sir,

It is my view that all cats should be kept inside or on thier own premises at all times. In our neighbourhood at present many rubbish bags are being ripped open non-stop and we all want something done about it. The sound of thier howling at night is enough to keep you awake for good ~~Also the smell of thier wee is so totally off putting to all those who have to put up with it!~~

At present thier are actually five stray cats roaming around and 2 of them fight with my 6 month kitten who is always around the back of our house. I think I should make it clear too that all cats should be desexed as soon as possible.

Some people might happen to like these rather cute household pets but can't you see whats going on here people are on the cats side when they are ~~doing things~~ becoming town nusances.

Also they might not have owners, but what is the R.S.P.C.A for? surely they could take the time to do something about it.

conclusion.

I think you should do something about this complaint because its not only me that has this problem but quite a few families have too

yours sincerly

Sincerely

d. Final version

[student's address given here]

The Chief Executive Officer
District Council

SA

18/4/90

Dear Sir,

It is my view that all cats should be kept inside or on thier own premises at all times. In our neighbourhood at present many rubbish bags are being ripped open non-stop and we want something done about it. The sound of thier howling is enough to keep you awake for good After present ther is actually five stray cats roaming around and are two of ther fight with my 6 month old kitten who is always around the back. I think I should make it clear too that I think all cats should be desexed. Some people might happen to like these rather cute household pets but people are on the cats side when they are becoming town nuisances.
Also they may not have owners, but what is the R.S.P.C.A for? surely they can take the time to do something about it. I think you should do something about this strong complaint because its not only me that has this problem but quite a few families have too.

yours sincerely,

Sample study of assessment and reporting practices in mathematics

During 1991 a sample study (Olssen 1992) was funded as a Project of National Significance to document school assessment and reporting practices in mathematics across Australian schools. The study included both the government and non-government sectors of primary and secondary schooling and was managed by the Education Department of South Australia.

Three categories of assessment practice were identified:

- formal assessment — involves an event such as a test or assignment planned to gather particular information;
- informal assessment — occurs coincidentally with learning in records such as student work folios or as a result of teacher observation;
- student self-assessment — a process of students reflecting, making judgements about their work and decisions about actions to further their learning.

The study found that much of current assessment practice in mathematics is formal, remains in the control of the teacher, requires written responses and occurs with little access to other resources.

The study highlighted, however, a lively and growing interest in moving towards more informal methods, including increasing utilisation of student self-assessment. This interest was shown not so much by newly recruited teachers as by those teachers who have been, in the course of their professional lives, evolving more innovative teaching styles to enable more effective learning.

The study noted current national developments in curriculum and how these were involving more varied forms of assessment, including the development of nationally agreed profiles for reporting of student achievement.

The study indicated that there was an evident need to implement both pre-service and in-service professional development programs to enable teachers to either expand the range of their assessment practices, or to value the full range of their current practices, in order to underpin the new national assessment initiatives.

English

Following presentation of the Survey of English Language/Literacy Curriculum in Australian Schools in December 1990, the draft national statement was prepared and distributed for comment in the second half of 1991. As might be expected in such a fundamental subject area as English language/literacy, the draft generated very substantial feedback, leading to a major revision of the statement being undertaken, with publication expected in early 1992.

An important part of the national collaboration in curriculum exercise involves the development and collection of examples of student work from across all systems demonstrating the learning processes involved at the various levels. These examples of good practice provide a set of common reference points which enable teachers to keep abreast of national developments, and assist in the achievement of national consistency in standards. Figure 4 illustrates a set of English language and literacy learning outcomes for level 3 achievement (writing).

Supporting the national goals

Teaching and learning

The National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL)

In February 1991 the Hon John Dawkins, Federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training, launched a special national project 'to restructure the teaching profession, deal with low teacher morale, and improve the quality of teaching and learning'. Establishment of the project had been foreshadowed at the December 1990 meeting of the Australian Education Council in Adelaide, by Minister Dawkins, 1990 Chair of the AEC.

The National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning brought together for the first time teacher unions, State and non-government employers of teachers, and the Federal Government into a single forum to work jointly on key policy and procedural teaching and learning issues across the nation.

In launching the project, Minister Dawkins said that it was expected to address such issues as:

- teacher career paths, the nature of teachers' work, the rewards they receive for this work and the qualifications and skills of Advanced Skills Teachers;
- teacher mobility, recognition of qualifications across the States and Territories and between school systems, and the portability of entitlements, such as superannuation, leave, etc.;
- teacher education, including initial training and preparation, ongoing and in-service training, and accreditation and consideration of appraisal to make sure teacher education is relevant;
- supply and demand, including the status of the profession to make sure there is an adequate supply of high-quality teachers.

The governing board of the NPQTL is chaired by the Commonwealth, and includes representation from the Commonwealth Government, the eight State and Territory government employers, the two peak national bodies representing non-government school employers (NCEC and NCISA), Australian Teachers' Union representatives from each State and Territory, the Independent Teachers' Federation and the ACTU.

The project established three key working parties during 1991:

- The Working Party on Work Organisation and Related Pedagogical Issues deals with the organisational aspects of the work of schools and teachers for the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of schools. Its particular initiative is the National Schools Project, a pilot project which will investigate how changes to work organisation can lead to improved outcomes in student learning.
- The Working Party on National Professional Issues has as its major focus the development of a nationally consistent framework for recognition of teachers' qualifications and portability of entitlements, including such issues as teacher registration and the establishment of a national professional body for teachers.
- The Working Party on Professional Preparation and Career Development is addressing the issues of teacher education and induction, professional development, options for career structures and appraisal systems.

The NPQTL is committed to communication with those involved in education and has developed a publicity and consultation strategy to this end. The newsletter *Quality Time* provides information and publicity for the project's agenda and major events.

Management information sample study

A 1991 project, Information for Management, Planning and Review, was conducted to examine the information requirements for State and Commonwealth policy formulation, strategic planning, resource monitoring and satisfaction of accountability requirements at both State and national levels. The project was managed by the Victorian Department of School Education and funded by the Commonwealth as a Project of National Significance. The impetus for the project came from:

- a common interest in the development of Executive Information Systems (EIS) in a number of State and Territory education departments as well as the Commonwealth;
- a desire to establish a forum for the exchange of information and ideas about these developments;
- a need to identify high-quality corporate information as required by senior executives;
- the potential support for national accountability and reporting needs;
- in some instances, an interest in undertaking cooperative development work.

The project was undertaken in the context of the following major developments in school education having impact on information requirements:

- new methods of funding schools — including a wide range of bulk-funding packages;
- devolution of decision making to schools;
- increased public accountability for effective use of resources;
- development of strategic plans specifying major objectives, priorities and intentions;
- improved monitoring of and reporting by schools.

The first phase of the project examined the information needs of senior executives. In the second phase, project participants undertook activities to achieve improvement in the collection and reporting of data:

- Victoria worked on designing a system for reporting expenditure against budget for use in budget centres located in central and regional offices. This is to be incorporated into the Decision Support System (DSS), a computer-based information system for senior executives.
- Queensland began development of a school census processing system.
- South Australia undertook development of the SA Education Information System (EIS), with particular emphasis on human resource management and budget monitoring.
- Tasmania commenced development and evaluation of a needs formula for allocation of resources to schools based on the profile of students in each school.
- ACT defined the integration requirements for establishing a data framework for use in a to-be-developed EIS system.

The Effective Schools Project

In April 1991 the Commonwealth, State and Territory education ministers initiated the Good Schools Strategy. The first stage of this was the Effective Schools Project, which was intended to stimulate discussion in schools throughout Australia about what makes an effective school. Each school community was invited to engage in public discussion leading to a strengthening of existing school development programs and assisting in the formulation of new ones. The project was seen as a unique initiative in Australian education, involving the collaboration of all Australian education ministers, having a national focus but at the same time being community based.

The project emphasised that its focus was on what schools contributed to the development of students and not on good results due simply to the nature of the students who were enrolled. The notion of 'value added' was introduced through an adoption of the definition used by Professor Mortimore, University of London, that an effective school

is one that achieves more than could be expected on the basis of its intake.

The project involved a staged series of activities, which are outlined below.

Stage 1—Preparation of discussion materials

Ministers commissioned the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to prepare a booklet and video. The booklet contained a questionnaire through which responses could be presented to ACER for compilation into a national report. Some 300,000 copies were printed for distribution to schools, accompanied by a videotape, of which 7,000 copies were distributed to schools for use in public discussions.

Stage 2—Discussions

State and Territory launches of the discussion stage of the project took place in July 1991. Three experts working in the area of school effectiveness in Norway, Wales and Canada were brought to Australia to assist in the project. A series of discussions commenced in August 1991, continuing over several months. Schools were invited to hold discussions within their communities, either on a single occasion, or over a series of occasions. Organisation was left to a local level, and ranged from general meetings to the establishment of smaller working groups focusing on details of the project.

Stage 3—Feedback processes

There were over 7,200 responses to the survey. Of the total responses, 2,632 were from schools or groups within schools. Overall, responses were obtained from about one-quarter of all schools in Australia. Schools were also represented among the individual responses. There was an especially high level of participation from New South Wales, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

Responses from school communities to the question 'What makes an effective school?' included:

- the quality of the teachers and the curriculum (the two most frequently mentioned factors);
- developing in the student the skills to deal with adult life (emphasised as a highly desirable outcome of schooling, more so than performance on tests or in literacy and numeracy);
- students being respected and taught as individuals in a safe and caring, stimulating and child-centred environment;
- schools which were formally planned according to a shared vision, and where there were partnerships between teachers and parents (McGaw et al. 1991).

What is it like to be a student in an effective school?

- Students are the centrepoint of an effective school.
- An effective school provides a safe and congenial climate for learning.
- An effective school is concerned not only with learning but learning how to learn.
- An effective school has students working on activities that challenge them.
- An effective school ensures that appropriate homework is set for its students.
- An effective school encourages 'at risk' students to attend school and to continue their schooling.

(McGaw et al. 1991)

Stage 4—National report

Stage 4 will take place in early 1992, when the ACER will publish a major national report drawing together responses from around Australia, combined with findings from Australian and overseas research.

Stage 5—School development programs

Over the three-year period from early 1992, schools will be encouraged to undertake development programs based on their own discussions undertaken in Stage 2, and informed by the ACER's final report. The Commonwealth Government has allocated $10.5 million for the total program; most of this amount is to be provided in Stage 5 for implementation activities.

National Education Communications Framework

Following a sequence of AEC committees and working parties since 1983, focusing on educational technology and the use of satellite communications in the delivery of distance education, the council decided in April 1991 to establish a working party on a National Education Communications Framework. The working party was representative of schools and TAFE from all States, the Commonwealth, higher education and the non-government schools sector. Its initial charter was to investigate, among other things, the appropriate standards and the protocols necessary to implement a national framework for the use of communications technologies in education and training.

At its October 1991 meeting the AEC agreed to a series of recommendations from the working party and the Commonwealth to investigate the feasibility of establishing a national collaborative body to facilitate the use of communications technologies and open learning techniques

in education and training. Council also agreed to the establishment of a funded full-time secretariat, based in Adelaide, to assist the working party in carrying out its tasks.

Work commenced on development of a submission to the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal on planning for the sixth television station.

The working party also worked closely in liaison with the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training on plans for an open learning network in higher education.

The working party is expected to provide its final advice to ministers during 1992 on the possible establishment of an open learning technology corporation to implement the concept of a national education communications framework.

Resourcing the national goals

Special Premiers' Conference processes

After the October 1990 Special Premiers' Conference, a communique was issued which gave a clear indication that all heads of government agreed that reform of Commonwealth and State funding responsibilities for education, along with other areas, was needed, consistent with the maximisation of cooperation between levels of government, the mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities and the avoidance of overlap and duplication.

Commonwealth, State and Territory ministers with responsibilities for school education provided a framework for the development of advice to the Special Premiers' Conference by affirming two overriding principles:

1 The States and Territories have the primary responsibility for setting policy and delivering school education services.

2 Continuing cooperation on agreed goals and strategies between the States and Territories and the Commonwealth in school education is a national priority.

The AEC established a working party on school education to develop advice on improved financial and other relationships between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories in school education. The working party was asked to:

- examine existing arrangements for Commonwealth programs for government schools in the States and Territories, including joint programs for schools in both the government and non-government sectors;
- consider structures and processes for the development of national collaboration in school education;
- assess these funding arrangements and national level structures and processes against the principles contained in the communique from the Special Premiers'Conference;
- develop options for the improvement of arrangements and structures;
- consult on these options with major national interest groups and authorities;
- provide advice to the AEC on preferred directions.

National expenditure on education

Australia's school population is increasingly multicultural, it is both highly concentrated in urban areas and thinly scattered over vast areas of pastoral and semi-desert region, and far greater numbers of students are completing the full quota of the schooling years. Evidence from chapters of the two most populous States, New South Wales and Victoria, indicate that between one in four to one in five students enrolled in government schools is from non-English speaking backgrounds. Nationwide, a rich array of programs is being implemented in response to this situation.

Government expenditure on government schools

The AEC National Schools Statistics Collection provided estimates of government expenditures on government schools across Australia for the financial year 1990–91. These data exclude a number of items, most notably expenditure on superannuation, payroll tax, provision for long service leave and depreciation, estimated to add about 15 per cent to recurrent outlays.

In 1990–91, government expenditure (both State and Commonwealth) on government schools in Australia was estimated at $9.49 billion, the major categories of expenditure being:

- teaching staff salaries $5.45 billion (57 per cent);
- non-teaching staff salaries $1.04 billion (11 per cent);
- provision of buildings and grounds $0.72 billion (8 per cent);
- other operating expenditure $2.29 billion (24 per cent).

In aggregate, about 93 per cent of the expenditure was estimated to be allocated to in-school costs, and 7 per cent to items which do not fit the definition of in-school costs. When expressed in per student terms, it was estimated that in 1990–91 government expenditure on government schools in Australia was equivalent to $4,305 per student. Estimated per student expenditure on primary schools ($3,712) was lower than for secondary schools ($5,206).

Trends and projections of expenditure in schools

Expenditure on schools (both government and non-government) accounts for just under 60 per cent of total government outlays on education in Australia. The expanded levels of educational participation recommended by the Finn Report are likely to be a powerful influence on educational expenditure over the next decade. The analysis of recurrent expenditure on government and non-government schools from 1974 to 1990, prepared by Dr Gerald Burke (of Monash University) on behalf of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET), drew the following main conclusions:

- During the 1970s there was a very rapid growth in the inputs provided to government schools (mainly teachers) and, although the growth slowed down in the 1980s, it still averaged over 2 per cent per annum.
- The real inputs provided to non-government schools from government and private sources grew more slowly than for government schools in the 1970s, but faster in the 1980s.
- The increases in real outlays in the late 1980s appear to be due largely to the increase in financial benefits provided to students by State governments.
- The relative increase in general prices since 1984–85 compared to prices in the school sector (chiefly teachers' salaries) has reduced the costs of schools as a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- Since government school enrolments fell slightly during the late 1980s, real inputs per student have risen slightly faster than total outlays on government schools. However, this has been slightly offset by the impact of the increase in the proportion of students enrolled in secondary education, especially years 11 and 12, where the costs of schooling are higher.

In terms of projections for the decade to the year 2000, Burke estimated that government school enrolments are likely to rise by about 10 per cent, and non-government school enrolments by about 15 per cent. Assuming that current levels of resources per student are maintained during the decade, but that the salaries of teachers and other school personnel increase by 1 per cent per annum faster than the general level of prices, it is projected that expenditure on government schools would increase by about 20 per cent between 1990 and 2000, and non-government school expenditures by about 25 per cent. Although these projections represent substantial sums of money, it should be noted that both are lower than the projected rise in GDP (37 per cent) over the same period. Hence, on the basis of these assumptions, expenditure on schools would continue to decline as a proportion of GDP during the 1990s (Burke 1992).

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COMMON AND AGREED NATIONAL GOALS FOR SCHOOLING IN AUSTRALIA

1 To provide an excellent education for all young people, being one which develops their talents and capacities to full potential, and is relevant to the social, cultural and economic needs of the nation.

2 To enable all students to achieve high standards of learning and to develop self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, respect for others, and achievement of personal excellence.

3 To promote equality of education opportunities, and to provide for groups with special learning requirements.

4 To respond to the current and emerging economic and social needs of the nation, and to provide those skills which will allow students maximum flexibility and adaptability in their future employment and other aspects of life.

5 To provide a foundation for further education and training, in terms of knowledge and skills, respect for learning and positive attitudes for life-long education.

6 To develop in students:

- a the skills of English literacy, including skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing;
- b skills of numeracy, and other mathematical skills;
- c skills of analysis and problem solving;
- d skills of information processing and computing;
- e an understanding of the role of science and technology in society, together with scientific and technological skills;
- f a knowledge and appreciation of Australia's historical and geographic context;
- g a knowledge of languages other than English;
- h an appreciation and understanding of, and confidence to participate in, the creative arts;
- i an understanding of, and concern for, balanced development and the global environment;
- j a capacity to exercise judgement in matters of morality, ethics and social justice.

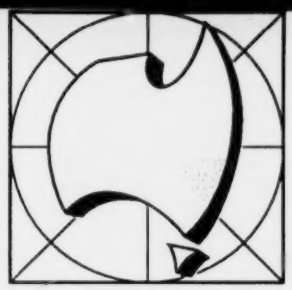
7 To develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable students to participate as active and informed citizens in our democratic Australian society within an international context.

8 To provide students with an understanding and respect for our cultural heritage including the particular cultural background of Aboriginal and ethnic groups.

9 To provide for the physical development and personal health and fitness of students, and for the creative use of leisure time.

10 To provide appropriate career education and knowledge of the world of work, including an understanding of the nature and place of work in our society.

NEW SOUTH WALES



Introduction

In 1991 in New South Wales 1,037,313 students were in schools—34 per cent of the nation's school students. Of these students 72 per cent attended primary or secondary schools operated by the Department of School Education and 28 per cent attended registered non-government schools provided, in the case of systemic schools, through Catholic dioceses and the Seventh Day Adventist system, or in the case of non-systemic schools, by governing bodies. A small number of children undertook approved home schooling.

Priority objectives for 1991

Government schools

The government school system aims to educate the public school students of New South Wales for the benefit of each individual, the community and the nation. To achieve this aim, the Department of School Education has adopted ten broad objectives. Since 1989 the department has chosen specific areas of its broad objectives as priorities for change and development each year. Nine priorities were chosen for 1991, and these formed the basis of planning at all levels. The priorities were:

- to implement the main strategies and recommendations of the Scott Report to ensure that the school, not a central bureaucracy, is the focus of education services;
- to promote and recognise excellence and choice, and to help specific groups of students benefit more from their education;
- to enhance the initial preparation of teachers and the ongoing professional development of all staff;
- to integrate technology into the learning experiences of students and to provide more efficient administrative support;
- to demonstrate the excellence of government schools and the value of teaching as a profession;
- to improve the welfare of students and staff;
- to strengthen close links with business and industry so as to provide curriculum and educational experiences relevant to the long-term needs of students and the community;
- to encourage the involvement of parents and community more closely in school decision making, especially in the use of school facilities and local staff selection;
- to improve curriculum implementation and the educational outcomes of students in various key learning areas, and in environmental education, student assessment and basic skills testing.

Non-government systemic schools

For the period 1989–1992 Catholic systemic schools adopted program objectives under four broad headings: the curriculum, personal and Christian values, institutional and community involvement, and special needs and disadvantage.

In 1991 diocesan education systems emphasised the following program objectives:

- restructuring and self-renewal of schools, with an emphasis on decision making at the school level;
- improving desired educational outcomes by coordinating system activities in specific curriculum areas, with an emphasis on literacy, science, technology, mathematics, health, physical education, personal development and religious education;
- providing opportunities for all students to develop their individual potential in all fields, especially for Aboriginal students and students disadvantaged by socioeconomic status, isolation, special academic needs or gender inequity;
- integrating students with disabilities into regular schools and providing support structures;
- changing and diversifying curriculum to meet the needs of the growing proportion of students continuing to years 11 and 12;

- maximising the competence, efficiency, confidence and morale of teachers and school executives by increasing opportunities for continuing professional and personal development;
- managing costs so that, ideally, no Catholic child seeking enrolment is denied Catholic schooling for purely financial reasons.

The Seventh Day Adventist schools in New South Wales had as their priorities for 1991:

- to provide an excellent education for all young people;
- to develop in students the skills of literacy, numeracy, analysis and problem solving;
- to provide appropriate career education and knowledge of the world of work.

Independent schools

In 1991 there were 225 regular and 28 special non-systemic schools in New South Wales. Most were coeducational and almost two-thirds served metropolitan communities. While the large majority of schools were affiliated with Christian organisations, seven were Jewish, one was Aboriginal and others were community-based or based on differing philosophies of education.

Information provided by these schools to the Department of Employment, Education and Training indicated that in 1991 emphasis was on providing an education that develops the talents and capacities of students to their full potential, and on maximising the competence, confidence and efficiency of teachers. Almost half the schools placed some priority in 1991 on the development in students of skills in English literacy, including skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing; and numeracy and other mathematical skills.

Another objective emphasised in 1991 dealt with the provision of feedback to school communities on school operations. Many schools reported that for both primary and secondary students, in addition to the priorities mentioned above, emphasis was being given to the development of a knowledge of languages other than English, scientific and technological skills, and skills in information processing and computing.

State priorities and national goals

The priorities listed above, for the government and non-government sector, contribute to the achievement of the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia. They give emphasis to excellence and equity, they focus on the key areas of student learning, and they continue the important tasks of encouraging the involvement of parents and the community in school decision making, of strengthening the links with business and industry, and of promoting the professional development of teachers.

Excellence and equity

Retention and age participation rates

At the 1991 mid-year census the year 7 to year 12 retention rate was 56 per cent for government schools and 74 per cent for non-government schools. In both sectors the figures are part of a trend towards higher school retention in Australia. The rates for both sectors and for all schools for selected years in New South Wales are set out in Table 1.

Table 1. Year 12 retention by sector, selected years (per cent)

	Govt	*Non-govt*	*All schools*
1971	29	39	31
1976	31	45	34
1981	28	50	33
1986	39	60	44
1989	49	69	54
1990	51	71	57
1991	56	74	61

Source: ABS, *Schools Australia*, Cat. No. 4221.0

Up to the mid-1970s the retention for male students to year 12 had been higher than for female students. Since then female students in New South Wales have remained longer at school, as is illustrated in Table 2.

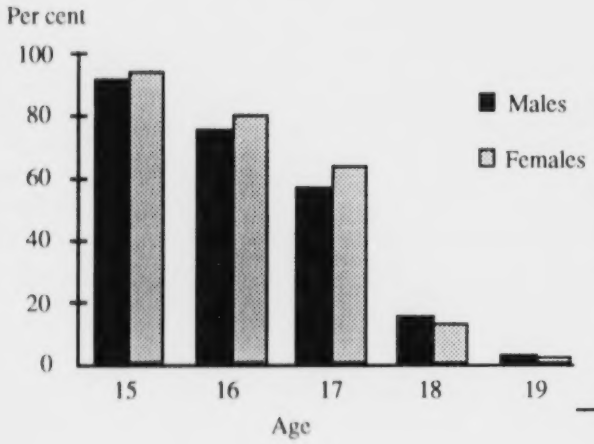
Table 2. Year 12 retention by gender, selected years (per cent)

	Males	*Females*	*All students*
1971	36	26	31
1976	36	33	34
1981	31	35	33
1986	42	47	44
1989	51	58	54
1990	52	62	57
1991	57	66	61

Source: ABS, *Schools Australia*, Cat. No. 4221.0

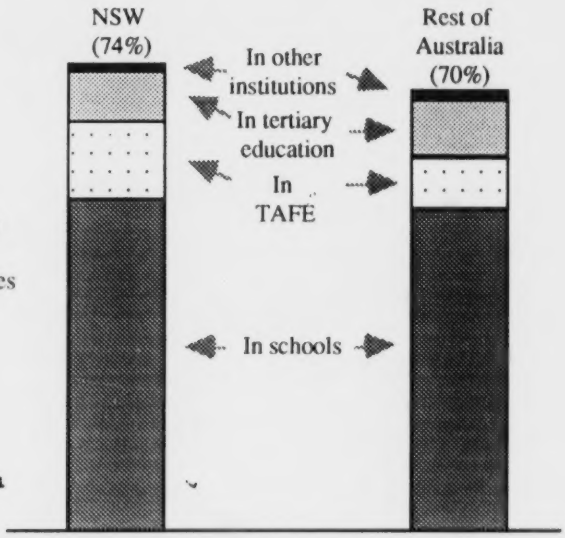
In 1991 in New South Wales some 48 per cent of young adults aged 15 to 19 years were at school. The difference in this age participation for males and females in schools is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Age participation in school by gender, 1991



Source: ABS, *Schools Australia*, Cat. No. 4221.0

Figure 2. Age participation in education and training, 1991



Percentage of 15-19 year olds attending school, TAFE, tertiary or other educational institution

Source: Derived from ABS, *Participation in Education, Australia*, September 1991, Cat. No. 6272.0

In 1991 the participation rate of 15–19-year-olds in education and training was higher in New South Wales (74 per cent) than in the rest of Australia (70 per cent), as illustrated in Figure 2.

Effective schools

School decision making

As part of the commitment of the Department of School Education to ensuring that schools, not the central bureaucracy, are the focus of education services, several functions and decision-making responsibilities have been devolved to schools. Functions which have been devolved from the State office to regions include: employment of teachers and public sector staff; retirements, secondments and deployments; monitoring of school-based staff development; local industrial relations matters; and some aspects of properties and salaries/payroll functions, staff development programs, and equity program management.

In 1991 there was significant devolution of responsibility to principals of schools for matters such as sport, excursions, school development days, sponsorship, the hiring of some staff, relieving positions in schools, the exclusion of students from school, and variations to school routine, time and hours. The delegation to principals of decision making in other areas, such as teacher leave approvals and the use of relief days, was under consideration, and schools were asked to identify other areas for possible devolution.

Catholic schools have a tradition of autonomy. While non-systemic Catholic schools are completely autonomous and controlled by governing boards, the systemic schools are governed under a variety of arrangements. The 11 Catholic dioceses are autonomous, most with their own education board. In several dioceses, school boards or councils work with the principal and parish priest as the school governing body. In other cases, schools have advisory councils or finance committees. Diocesan education offices support schools with curriculum consultants, in-service provision and central administrative services, such as payroll and staffing allocations, for systemic schools

At present systemic schools have budget control of all school expenditure other than for staffing, which is allocated centrally. Some diocesan boards are moving to school control of the staffing budget. Diocesan education offices ensure equity of provision among systemic schools.

Independent schools are autonomous non-profit making bodies controlled by boards of governors. They make independent decisions concerning administrative policy and the allocation of financial and human resources.

School councils

School councils continued to be established in government schools so that at the end of the year, 532 schools—one in every four—had a school council in operation. The membership of school councils comprises parents, members of the community, school staff and may include students. School councils encourage discussion and decision making on such issues as school aims, curriculum, uniforms, student welfare and discipline, as well as priorities in budgetary matters.

A feature of the various diocesan school councils and boards is parent participation. Dioceses provide in-service training for board and council members. Several dioceses have parent representative bodies. Parents are generally members of the selection panels for principals.

Community consultation

In the government school system the Schools Renewal Community Consultative Group provides a formal mechanism by which those groups most affected by the Schools Renewal Strategy can influence the effectiveness and efficiency of the change process. The 30 members of the consultative group represent parent groups, unions, employer and industry associations, professional associations, and community and special interest groups. The consultative group provides advice to the department and to an external monitoring committee on priorities for implementation and other issues related to Schools Renewal.

The ten regions of the Department of School Education engage in extensive consultation with their communities. Mechanisms have been established for community involvement in regional decision making with regard to finance, personnel development, education programs and planning. In addition, initiatives in areas such as Aboriginal and multicultural education are supported by advisory committees with significant community-based membership.

Parents in government and non-government schools, through their involvement in school councils or boards, are becoming more aware of issues related to the quality of performance and outcomes in schools, and the appraisal mechanisms and indicators to ensure and measure quality of performance.

In Catholic schools, teachers and parents are looking to a period of stability to absorb the effects of government policy on schools and the curriculum changes of recent years. The potential impact of the Finn and Mayer reports is recognised as a major challenge for schools.

Equity initiatives

Distance education

In the government sector, distance education provides isolated students in New South Wales with access to educational facilities, teachers and peers. In 1991 distance education facilities were decentralised to 11 primary and 6 secondary education centres across the State.

The Learning Materials Production Centre in Sydney worked closely with distance education centres to produce a range of specialised curriculum materials from preschool to year 12. Other resources were designed to meet the varied academic needs and interests of more than 1,200 full-time students and over 2,000 part-time students enrolled in the Open High School. The Open High School began in 1991 to supplement the education of secondary students unable to be fully catered for in their home school, a role previously undertaken by the former Correspondence School.

There was a marked increase in 1991 in field services and lessons by teleconferencing. The use of communication technologies is to be extended and the VHF radio network for primary centres west of Dubbo will be in place in 1992.

Rural education

The Commonwealth-funded country areas program aims to help schools and communities improve the educational participation and achievement of geographically isolated students. Through the emphasis on sharing and community participation, the personal development of students is enhanced and their interests broadened, the professional isolation of teachers is diminished, the local responses to local needs lead to innovative and effective approaches, and the barriers between government and non-government schools are broken down.

In the five 'prescribed' areas in 1991—the North West, North West Riverina, South West Riverina, South Coast and Western—31,000 students from 256 government and non-government schools were eligible to participate in initiatives for which funds of $3.381 million were provided. The major achievement for 1991 was the expansion of the program to include an additional 103 schools across the prescribed areas.

The Central Schools Years 11–12 Access Program assists students in small central schools to undertake year 11 and 12 studies. During 1991 the program included schools around two centres, at Ardlethan in the Riverina region and at Peak Hill in the Western region. The schools pool their teaching resources and are linked electronically. Enrolments in the program have doubled in its second year and the first year 12 candidates sat the HSC examination in 1991.

Catholic dioceses in rural areas gave particular attention to the education of isolated students. Conferences were held on the special needs of rural students. Computer and

satellite technology is being trialled to expand curriculum choices for isolated students, and a mobile resource van has been introduced by one diocese to service small rural schools.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds

For government schools in 1991 the Disadvantaged Schools Program continued to assist schools and community groups improve the educational participation, learning outcomes and personal development of young people disadvantaged by socioeconomic circumstances. Submissions from schools for program funds focused on the areas of literacy, numeracy and expressive arts—the additional resources under the program enhancing the availability of computer hardware and creative software for specific projects and ensuring the development of other important curriculum support materials. Strong links were developed between disadvantaged schools, regional offices, parent–community organisations and government and departmental agencies providing support for low socioeconomic status students.

In non-government schools the disadvantaged schools program continued to focus on the development of school-level curriculum in language, numeracy, computer education, science and technology, community languages and library. Pastoral care and community liaison remained features of the program. Field officers supported the development and implementation of the whole-school approach to long-term change. Five group projects, involving clusters of schools, were funded in 1991. These projects addressed a range of programs including curriculum and professional development, music and creative arts, and parent participation.

Gifted and talented students

In April 1991 the NSW Government's strategy for the education of gifted and talented students was released, outlining a broad framework to cater for such students.

The Board of Studies distributed to all schools in July 1991 policy documents on curriculum reform, including guidelines for accelerated progression. The guidelines outline board policy on acceleration and aim to assist schools in identifying students who would benefit from acceleration. Accelerated progression allows certain students to complete the requirements for the School Certificate and HSC in one, more or all subjects ahead of their age peers. The board has negotiated the development of new high-level HSC courses, called distinction courses, to extend exceptional students and provide links with university study.

The Department of School Education launched its policy on the education of gifted and talented students in November 1991. The policy and its accompanying teaching strategies support the current provision made by schools and regions to identify and provide for gifted and talented students.

The policy statement also provides a framework for the future expansion of provisions for gifted and talented students. The primary objective is to provide challenging education for these students. In accordance with Government policy it emphasises a broad approach to the identification of gifted and talented students to ensure that those from disadvantaged groups are not overlooked. Accelerated progression, mentor programs and out-of-school-hours programs have been introduced across the State in government schools.

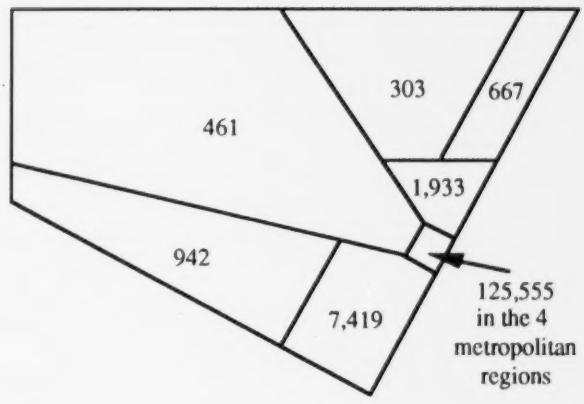
Opportunity classes for academically gifted students in the upper primary years will be extended to all regions. In addition, a number of specialist high schools have been established—agricultural, selective, technology, language, performing arts, music, sports and senior high schools. These schools provide additional choice and particular curriculum enrichment.

In the Catholic system, procedures for identification, referral and placement of gifted and talented students have been established. Extension services and accelerated learning have been introduced along with in-service education of teachers.

Students of non-English speaking background

At the August 1991 census government schools had enrolled 137,286 students of non-English speaking background (NESB). A little over 90 per cent of these students (125,555) attended government schools in one or other of the four metropolitan regions of the State.

Figure 3. Students of non-English speaking background regional distribution, NSW government schools, August 1991



Source: NSW Department of School Education, *Statistical Bulletin*, August 1991

The Board of Studies ensures its syllabuses and support materials cater for the needs of NESB students. Syllabus support materials and teaching kits provide practical guidance to teachers in catering for these students.

In 1991 the Department of School Education strengthened its equity focus on multicultural education in three ways:

- a project was initiated to develop strategies for eliminating racism in schools and developing positive community relations strategies;
- ethnic affairs issues were incorporated into management practices at school, regional and State level;
- an anti-racist policy statement was prepared in consultation with the community.

Future directions for multicultural education have been confirmed through:

- participation in the national review of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program commissioned by the Department of Employment, Education and Training;
- revisions of the Commonwealth formula for allocation of ESL General Support funds to States through the national reference group;
- a plan for evaluating the implementation of the multicultural education policy;
- the development of a draft multicultural education plan and ethnic affairs policy statement for consultation.

Enhanced provision for NESB students has been achieved through:

- the provision and evaluation of the training course for ESL teachers conducted at the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research and the University of Technology, Sydney;
- the implementation of multicultural initiatives at school, regional and State levels in accordance with developed guidelines;
- the expansion of the Saturday School of Community Languages;
- the development of a policy statement on intensive English centres.

It is encouraging to note that basic skills test results since 1989 indicate a steady improvement in literacy and numeracy for those NESB students who rarely use English at home and who have been in Australia for only four years or less.

In Catholic schools an extensive network of specialist teachers and facilities supports 46,500 NESB students concentrated in the metropolitan area of Sydney. An intensive language centre is attached to a metropolitan secondary school.

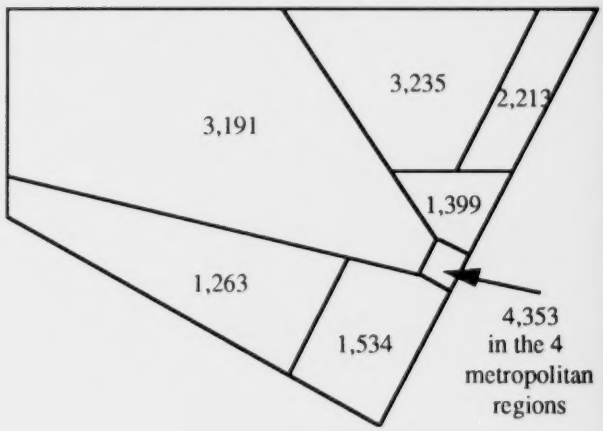
Anti-racism education

In 1991, as part of its plan to eliminate racism, including racial discrimination, prejudice, vilification and harassment in its curriculum and all its learning and working environments, the Department of School Education released its anti-racism draft policy for responses from teachers, other staff and the community. The policy, drafted after extensive consultations with ethnic and other interest groups, also seeks to ensure equal opportunity, and greater support for better educational outcomes for Aboriginal and NESB students.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

About one in four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attending schools in Australia in 1991 enrolled in NSW schools. Of the 18,313 enrolled at the August 1991 census 17,188 attended government schools. The distribution of government school enrolments over the ten education regions of the State is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Aboriginal students in NSW government schools, regional distribution, August 1991



Source: NSW Department of School Education, *Statistical Bulletin*, August 1991

In 1991 the achievements in Aboriginal education included:

- the introduction of the new years 11–12 Aboriginal studies syllabus. This syllabus is designed for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. It will be examined at the HSC for the first time in 1992. Twelve schools introduced Aboriginal studies in year

11 in 1991. Over 150 more schools expressed interest in offering the course in year 11 in 1992;

- the start of development work on a years 7–10 Aboriginal studies syllabus. This involved extensive consultation with Aboriginal communities;
- the appointment of 38 additional Aboriginal education assistants and 9 additional Aboriginal education resource teachers;
- the participation of an extra nine school clusters in the Aboriginal early language development program;
- the development and promulgation of guidelines for the Priority Schools Program and the Aboriginal Early Language Development Program, and for regional Aboriginal education advisory committees;
- the establishment of two preschool centres in communities where there were no services for Aboriginal children;
- the development and introduction of a training package for teachers and Aboriginal education assistants implementing the HSC Aboriginal studies course;
- the allocation of funds to allow regions to increase school participation in the Priority Schools Program;
- the promotion of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Week in all government schools.

In Catholic schools in areas where there are significant numbers of Aboriginal students, emphasis has been given to the employment of home–school liaison officers and teacher support teams. Aboriginal education is a regular part of teacher in-service activities. There is an emphasis on curriculum for Aboriginal studies.

Special education

In 1991 the Board of Studies established a special education reference panel to advise on providing for students with disabilities and learning difficulties. The panel is developing further curriculum and curriculum support materials to assist teachers of students with disabilities, learning difficulties and behavioural disorders.

In the Department of School Education enhancements and expansion to special education services were achieved through the implementation of the third year of the Special Education Plan, designed to improve educational opportunities for students with disabilities, learning difficulties or behavioural disorders. In 1991 the fourth year of the Special Education Plan was developed and trials of three major initiatives were consolidated.

In 1991 the Reading Recovery Program, which provides early remedial intervention for students experiencing reading failure at the end of year 1, was expanded into five regions, with training underway for a sixth region.

The Transition Education Program was trialled in all regions in 1991. The program is designed to prepare individual transition plans for students with disabilities who are moving from school into community-based work or recreation options. As part of the process, wherever practical, of moving students with disabilities out of specific-purpose schools, the number of these students in regular schools has continued to rise and in 1991 totalled 10,411.

An additional resource centre was established in two regions, making a total of eight centres which provide diagnostic, referral, outreach and on-site support for students with learning difficulties and their families.

A number of special education curriculum resources were launched in 1991, including the Auditory Skills Program for teachers working with deaf and hearing-impaired students, and a communications options manual for teachers working with students with severe communication disabilities.

In 1991 each region of the Department of School Education established a special education advisory committee to advise on all matters pertaining to special education in the region. As well, equity and innovations grants totalling $1 million were distributed to schools, community groups and individuals trialling innovations in government schools, and another $1 million on innovative technology was distributed among students with disabilities in government schools.

In Catholic schools the focus of special education was the integration of students with disabilities into mainstream schools. Special education consultants, in-service support teams and teacher aides support regular classroom teachers. The in-service support is available to parents as well as teachers. Diocesan education offices have special education committees for student assessment and programming. An emphasis for secondary-age students is work experience placement and placement in suitable TAFE courses.

During 1991, 31 independent special schools provided for students with high support needs across a variety of areas of disability. At the same time, the number of students with disabilities integrated into mainstream schools has substantially increased. Special education consultants from the Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales provided support to teachers, administrators, school boards and parents in the areas of assessment, programming, in-service and placement.

Education of girls

The Board of Studies requires that its syllabuses cater for the needs of both boys and girls and that these should reflect an expectation that boys and girls should equally be able to achieve syllabus objectives.

In 1991 the education of girls was a priority area with the Department of School Education and the Catholic diocesan education offices. The Girls Education Strategy, released in 1989, sets out three main objectives:

- to increase the participation of girls in mathematics, science and technology-related subjects;
- to expand career options for girls;
- to provide supportive and challenging learning environments.

In 1991 the department's ten regions each designated a senior officer to coordinate the implementation of the Girls Education Strategy. In addition, two officers in the Curriculum Directorate were responsible for policy advice, leadership, monitoring and reporting on initiatives in girls' education. Achievements resulting from collaboration among all these officers included:

- the development of Statewide indicators for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Girls Education Strategy;
- reports on national curriculum issues, especially in relation to the National Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project;
- an information exchange on girls' education initiatives;
- funding for innovative projects of national significance;
- professional development opportunities.

The department participated in the Australian Education Council review of the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools. Consultants visited five locations in New South Wales—Wagga Wagga, Campbelltown, Dubbo, Port Macquarie and Sydney. The findings from this review, to be released in 1992, will be used to revise policy.

To implement the Girls Education Strategy, schools have undertaken the following initiatives:

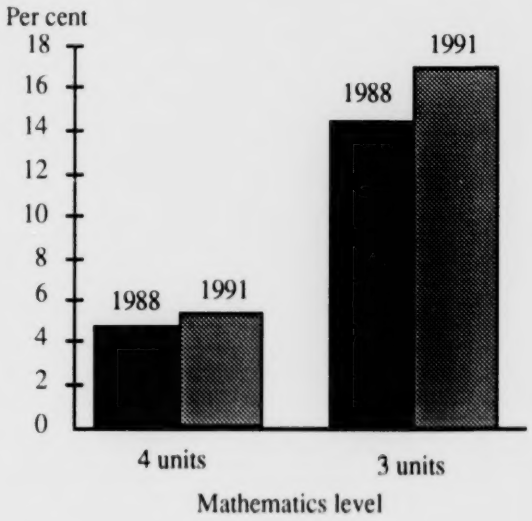
- school development days to analyse policies;
- technology days or technology camps;
- single-sex classes in mathematics and science;
- joint school and TAFE programs for girls;
- visits to TAFE colleges;
- leadership development programs.

Regional initiatives included:

- increasing regional personnel with expertise in gender equity issues;
- workshops for teachers and members of the school community, e.g. a women as managers workshop;
- development of packages and kits;
- career education workshops for girls;
- girls' technology expos to improve learning outcomes for girls in mathematics, science and technology-related subjects.

A Statewide indicator of progress in the implementation of the Girls Education strategy is the shift in the percentage of girls electing to study higher levels of mathematics in year 12. This is illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Percentage of female students studying higher level mathematics in year 12 in NSW government schools, 1988 and 1991



Source: NSW Department of School Education, *Statistical Bulletin*, August 1991

In 1991 a report was released on a pilot study to encourage girls into technology. Seventy-three schools participated in the study, running technology camps, science and mathematics days, and other projects. The most effective programs involved the whole school community, provided well-planned activities and 'hands on' experience, issued specific and immediate results, and acknowledged the achievements of the girls. Role models were also seen as valuable. Teachers found that girls learned best in cooperative situations, and that well-managed, single-sex groupings were beneficial.

Regional data on work experience placements for girls and boys in years 8 to 12 indicated that participation rates for girls in the major occupational categories of managers, administrators, professional, para-professional and trades were higher than in the national workforce.

Student welfare

There has been a strong emphasis in the government sector on the coordination of student welfare programs and initiatives, and the creation of a climate which sustains and motivates high levels of student achievement. In most regions, school counselling, home–school liaison and special education services have been drawn together within a student services group, usually located in an education resource centre. This amalgamation offers more effective integration, and greater flexibility and responsiveness in providing support to schools.

The school counselling service undertook valuable pioneering work in helping government schools cope with trauma incidents throughout the year. There was a continuing emphasis on programs which supported positive school discipline. Materials were also developed which focused on the management of aggressive and disruptive student behaviour, domestic violence and its effects on children, and violence against homosexual men and women.

General and vocational education

Post-compulsory schooling initiatives

The Department of School Education, the Board of Studies, non-government school authorities and TAFE are pursuing a number of initiatives to meet emerging needs in post-compulsory education and training. These include:

- the development, by the Department of School Education, of a post-compulsory education strategic plan;
- the continued expansion of the joint secondary schools/TAFE program, including the trialling of more flexible course delivery arrangements;
- the negotiation of credit transfer between the HSC and TAFE studies;
- more flexible modes of study for the HSC, including provisions for accelerated progression and for accumulating the certificate over a number of years;
- the development of a new course in industry studies for years 11 and 12, which incorporates structured workplace training and is aligned with national industry competency standards;
- the establishment of joint school and TAFE educational facilities.

These initiatives will support the convergence of general and vocational education, and the wider range of educational pathways provided by these changes will better meet the needs of post-compulsory students.

In the Catholic and independent sector, schools offered as broad a range of senior school courses as possible for the growing proportion of post-compulsory students. The range includes courses endorsed by the Board of Studies and schools/TAFE courses which have joint accreditation from the Board of Studies for the HSC and from TAFE. A post-compulsory education strategy and a position on the Finn and Mayer agenda are being developed.

Certification

The Board of Studies is responsible for administering the School Certificate and HSC, which continued to be important indicators of student achievement for secondary schools.

Staying on

The Commonwealth's Staying on Program encourages students to continue schooling beyond the school leaving age of 15. It aims to develop excellence in fundamental skills and promote readiness for life as a citizen and as a member of the workforce and the local community. The program provides opportunities for teachers, parents and students to cooperate in planning for high-quality educational and advisory services. The program began in 1988 as part of the Western Sydney (Quality Education) Plan. In 1991 the program covered 70 schools across 9 regions, including 20 schools under the Students at Risk Program. Schools in the Staying on Program were chosen on the basis of factors such as retention rates for years 9 to 12, geographic location and high concentrations of traditionally disadvantaged groups.

Recent figures show apparent retention rates in 'staying on' schools increasing by nearly 9 percentage points, compared to a State increase of just over 7 percentage points.

Schools and TAFE links

The Joint Secondary Schools and TAFE Program is designed to enhance the educational opportunities of secondary school students in years 11 and 12. In 1991 the program continued to expand to include over 10,200 students, 385 government schools and 105 colleges of TAFE. There was also an increase of 21 per cent in the number of joint schools–TAFE courses operating in 1991 compared with 1990. Joint courses were approved in the areas of child, automotive and office studies, and in 1991 these courses accounted for 48 per cent of enrolments in all joint courses endorsed by the Board of Studies.

An evaluation of the first year of board-developed joint courses found that the courses were viewed favourably by most students, teachers, school and college principals, and regional personnel.

Liaison continued at senior level between the Department of School Education, TAFE, the Board of Studies, non-government school authorities and business to expand the

program. Initiatives included the establishment of credit transfer arrangements, the development of guidelines to assist regions in developing courses involving private providers of vocational education and training, and a trial whereby licensed secondary teachers deliver joint courses.

The Catholic sector, in its desire to expand joint school and TAFE courses, is negotiating on funding for course costs and timetabling arrangements. During 1991 one school, under licence from TAFE, piloted a TAFE-accredited course within the school. There are hopes of expanding such licence arrangements in 1992.

The Association of Independent Schools continues to support the program by participating in the joint Board of Studies and TAFE policy committee and its various working parties. While there has been a gradual increase in the participation rate of students from the independent school sector in courses provided through TAFE, participation has been on a user-pay basis. Negotiations on course costs are continuing.

Career education

In government high schools the main aspects of career education—the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable students to make informed decisions about school and post-school education, employment and training options—are included in the personal development, health and physical education syllabus. This syllabus was released by the Board of Studies in 1991 for mandatory implementation in years 7–10. Government high schools also have full-time careers advisers (384 in 1991), the majority of whom have undertaken the Department of School Education seven-week specialist training course.

Career education is available in all Catholic secondary schools, most of which have careers advisers. The dioceses have teacher networks to coordinate career education and work experience.

Work experience

The first comprehensive survey of work experience in NSW government schools was reported on in 1991. Of the 56,532 students who in 1990 participated in work experience, 87 per cent were in year 10. The most common program involved ten days or more of work experience, with 32 per cent of students choosing to gain experience in professional occupations, 27 per cent in trades, and 9 per cent in each of the para-professional, sales and secretarial categories.

Work experience is programmed for most year 10 students in Catholic schools. An insurance indemnity scheme for employers of work-experience students was made available to all schools in 1991.

Education, business and industry

The numerous and diverse education links with business aim to enrich the curriculum and offer students an insight into the working environment.

In 1991 a Statewide network of education and business links consultants and contact persons was established. During the year there were 213 central and high schools with 221 schools–industry links programs.

The most ambitious schools–industry program is a compact comprising five schools (including one non-government school) in the Botany area of Sydney, linked to 34 businesses through the Botany Enterprise Development Agency. The compact has the support of the local municipal council and community. In 1991 numerous activities were conducted to enrich the curriculum and to provide extensive 'world of work' education for students in the compact schools. Compacts in the St George area (in Metropolitan East) and Wagga Wagga (in Riverina) are planned for 1992.

The Schools Visits to Industry Program coordinates visits to business and industry for students from government and non-government schools. In 1991 more than 7,000 secondary students from 134 schools participated in a program of 371 visits.

The Teachers in Business Program provides practical business experience for teachers and school executives. The expertise gained can be applied in schools for the benefit of students and for the teachers' own professional development. In 1991, the first year of the Statewide Teachers in Business Program, 88 teachers worked for three weeks in businesses in various parts of New South Wales.

Areas of student learning

NSW Government policy regarding education is outlined in the *Education Reform Act 1990*. The Board of Studies is responsible for developing syllabuses from kindergarten to year 12, and for the administration of the School Certificate and HSC, as well as advising on the registration and accreditation of non-government schools. The Minister has responsibility for approving all syllabuses.

The Department of School Education is responsible for the provision of effective education in line with government policy.

The Board of Studies, the Department of School Education and other school authorities produce curriculum support materials for the learning areas.

Schools or systems can develop courses to meet particular student or community needs. School-based courses are available in years 9–10 (called school courses) and in years 11–12 (called other endorsed studies). These, and other courses not wholly derived from board courses, must be submitted to the board's regional endorsement panels for approval if they are to have board-endorsed status for the School Certificate and HSC.

The curriculum is organised into key learning areas. For primary schools the six key learning areas are:

- English;
- mathematics;
- science and technology;
- human society and its environment (including languages other than English);
- creative and practical arts;
- personal development, health and physical education.

The key learning areas for secondary schools are:

- English;
- mathematics;
- science;
- human society and its environment;
- languages other than English;
- technological and applied studies;
- creative arts;
- personal development, health and physical education.

Beginning with year 11 in 1992 and year 12 in 1993, all senior students must study at least two units of English and one unit in one subject from each of the following groups of key learning areas:

- mathematics; science; technological and applied studies;
- languages other than English; human society and its environment; creative arts; personal development, health and physical education.

Additional units of study are chosen by students to make up a minimum of 11 units for year 11 and 11 units for year 12.

In line with the recommendations of *Excellence and Equity*, the Government's White Paper on curriculum reform, the Board of Studies reviewed all its syllabuses in 1991 to reduce overlap and identify gaps in the curriculum. Consequently, the board decided to rewrite some syllabuses and develop new ones. The board also revised all syllabuses to include outcomes in terms of knowledge and skills that should be acquired by students at the end of each syllabus stage. All syllabuses under development will include outcomes.

English

This key learning area aims to develop competence in spoken and written language. Emphasis is placed on the importance of the processes of reading and writing.

During 1991 the board consulted widely with academics, practising teachers and the community in developing the draft English K–6 syllabus, which is based firmly on the functional model of language and acknowledges that different children acquire competence in different ways. The draft syllabus recognises the importance of teaching students about both literacy and factual texts. It incorporates mass media and also emphasises the use of drama as an experiential learning method as well as drama in response to literary texts. The board has also developed support materials and teaching kits for the syllabus. The Department of School Education will evaluate the draft syllabus to ensure that it is appropriate for implementation in government schools.

A recommended reading list for years 9 and 10 was developed in 1991 to assist teachers to select appropriate texts for the classroom. The annotated list covers a wide range of texts including non-fiction, film and access literature.

The study of English is compulsory. The number of students studying English for the HSC in government and non-government schools is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Students studying HSC English, 1991

	Male	*Female*	*Total*
3 units	959	2,542	3,501
2 units	4,213	6,750	10,963
General	15,585	15,590	31,175
Contemporary	4,352	3,034	7,386

Source: NSW Board of Studies, *HSC Examination Statistics*, 1991

In 1991, with the support of funds from the Commonwealth's Literacy and Learning Program, the NSW Department of School Education collaborated with its counterpart in Victoria in the production of a number of teacher training modules designed to enhance teachers' abilities in dealing with aspects of the curriculum related to literacy issues. The program aimed to further extend primary, secondary and across-faculty collaboration on literacy issues while strengthening the skills of teachers in the key learning areas.

In Catholic schools, apart from support for the general English curriculum, there was a special focus on literacy programs—in-service and training courses for teachers, early intervention literacy programs for students and the appointment of reading recovery teachers. In areas where there is a high proportion of NESB students, literacy programs were assisted by the Commonwealth's ESL Program and by bilingual support teachers.

A program entitled Accessing Learning: Language and Literacy Development in the Key Learning Areas Years 7–10 was initiated through funding from the Commonwealth Literacy and Learning Program and managed by the Archdiocese of Sydney. Four Catholic dioceses and the Association of Independent Schools were involved. The project aims to improve teacher knowledge, practice and assessment of student language, and literacy development in the secondary students in the key learning areas of technical and applied studies, and human society and its environment.

Languages other than English

The number of students studying languages other than English in years 7 to 12 in government schools at the August 1991 census is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Students studying languages other than English in government secondary schools, 1991

	Years 7–10	*Years 11–12*	*Total*
French	14,131	12,406	26,537
Japanese	11,874	1,869	13,743
German	8,991	1,360	10,351
Italian	3,373	673	4,046
Indonesian	1,878	404	2,282
Greek (modern)	998	1,006	2,004
Latin	1,363	135	1,498
Chinese	1,306	186	1,492
Arabic	1,064	292	1,356
Hebrew	781	17	798
Spanish	518	279	797
Russian	720	68	788
Greek (classical)	224	161	385
Turkish 45 52 197			
Vietnamese	—	141	141
Other	—	298	298
Total student pop. 219,925		**79,347**	**299,272**

Source: NSW Department of School Education, *Statistical Bulletin*, August 1991

In the primary school, languages other than English are part of the human society and its environment K–6 learning area. The Board of Studies completed a writing brief for the development of a general framework for languages other than English in 1991.

Under the *Education Reform Act*, the study of a language other than English for approximately 100 hours will become mandatory for the School Certificate for the 1996 year 7 cohort (i.e. the 1999 School Certificate). In 1991 there were board syllabuses for years 7–10 and years 11–12 in 29 different languages. The Board of Studies developed new syllabuses in Korean years 7–10, Vietnamese years 7–10, Arabic 2-Unit General, Korean 2-unit and Turkish 2-unit.

Syllabuses were revised for Hebrew years 7–10, Turkish years 7–10 and 2/3-Unit Latin. Statements of expected outcomes were also written and dispatched to schools for all existing languages other than English subjects.

For years 11–12 the Board of Studies, in conjunction with Victoria and South Australia, has been involved in the National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level Project. A syllabus model and assessment exemplars have been developed for 15 languages, mainly those attracting small numbers of candidates for the Higher School Certificate examination, such as Arabic, Czech, Estonian, Macedonian, Russian and Ukrainian.

In 1991 there were 17 languages high schools operating in New South Wales. A consultant was appointed in each of the ten regions to plan for the mandatory 100 hours of language study to be introduced for year 7 students in 1996.

The Catholic sector focused on Asian culture and languages, particularly Japanese and Indonesian, and major community languages in areas of high proportions of NESB students—Arabic, Spanish, Vietnamese and Italian. LOTE covers bilingual support, mother-tongue maintenance and second-language learning. The expansion of languages other than English has been hindered everywhere, but particularly in country areas, by insufficient qualified teachers. Commonwealth funding through the Australian Second Language Learning Program has been of considerable assistance.

Science

In 1991 the Board of Studies released the new K–6 science and technology syllabus and support documents for primary schools. The board also published science and technology teaching kits containing lesson outlines for units of work. To support the implementation of this syllabus the Department of School Education has developed a three-part plan as follows:

- Each region has developed and is using a package to introduce the new syllabus into schools.
- Primary Science and Technology Education Project (PRIMESTEP), a professional development program, is being used to establish a core of 'trainers' who will be used in long-term regional programs to help establish the learning area as part of the primary culture.
- The Curriculum Directorate of the Department of School Education has initiated with regional offices a cooperative venture to develop 40 units of work for teachers to support the teaching of science and technology in primary schools; 19 units have been completed, and the remaining 21 are at various stages of development.

In 1991 the board conducted a survey in order to determine which of the secondary syllabuses were still addressing the current needs and which needed to change. As a result of this survey many of the current secondary syllabuses, particularly those for years 11 and 12, are under review.

The number of students studying science in year 12 of government and non-government schools is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Students studying HSC science, 1991

	Male	*Female*	*Total*
4 units	339	306	645
3 units	119	154	273
Biology	6,421	11,620	18,041
Chemistry	7,499	5,875	13,374
Geology	310	177	487
Physics	8,656	3,440	12,096
General	2,022	1,598	3,620
Science for life	254	199	453

Source: NSW Board of Studies, *HSC Examination Statistics*, 1991

In 1991 in year 12 there were 3,044 (19 per cent) male students and 5,044 (27 per cent) female students who elected not to study a science course. Comparable figures for non-government schools are unavailable.

Technology

The development of effective technology curricula is a high priority of the NSW Government. The *Education Reform Act 1990* established key learning areas of science and technology K–6, and technology and applied studies 7–12.

Two major technology related syllabuses were approved for introduction in 1991. The science and technology K–6 syllabus and support materials for primary schools were released and are currently being implemented.

A years 7–10 design and technology syllabus was released to schools in 1991, and from 1995 all students will be required to complete approximately 200 hours study in this design and technology course for the School Certificate.

To support these syllabuses the Department of School Education introduced two major professional development projects—the Primary Science and Technology Education Project, and the Design and Technology Training Agents Program. Both initiatives are being used to establish a core of 'trainers' to be used in regional programs.

As part of the Government's commitment to technology education, 27 technology high schools have been established. These high schools, while providing a comprehensive education, are characterised by an approach to curriculum, pedagogy, administration and resources which emphasises knowledge about and use of a variety of current and emerging technologies.

In the Catholic sector most primary school staff were given in-service training on the K–6 science and technology syllabus.

Mathematics

The number of students studying mathematics in year 12 of government and non-government schools in 1991 is shown in Table 6. This represents over 97 per cent of all students enrolled in year 12.

Table 6. Students studying HSC mathematics, 1991

	Male	*Female*	*Total*
4 units	2,743	1,463	4,206
3 units	5,408	4,671	10,079
2 units	8,781	10,316	19,097
Maths (society)	7,565	10,062	17,627
Maths (practice)	329	589	918

Source: NSW Board of Studies, *HSC Examination Statistics*, 1991

The Board of Studies has developed outcomes statements for all mathematics syllabuses and is currently evaluating its syllabuses in years 9–12.

In government schools the results of numeracy tests in the Basic Skills Testing Program indicate an increasing understanding by students of the three major aspects of the syllabus—number, measurement and space.

New South Wales continues to play a key role in national collaboration work in mathematics. The mathematics profiles, which describe student achievement in terms of nationally agreed standards, will be completed in 1992 for implementation in Australian schools in 1993.

Studies of society and the environment

In New South Wales this key learning area is referred to as 'human society and its environment'. In years K–6 schools develop learning programs based on the *Investigating Social Studies K–6 Curriculum Policy Statement* (1982). The Board of Studies is developing a syllabus which incorporates social studies, Australian studies, environmental education, moral education, general religious education, career education and languages other than English. The syllabus is concerned with the interrelationships between humans, cultures, societies and environments, and the ways in which they are affected by time and place. Learning experiences which are promoted in the syllabus assist students to develop the skills of interacting, analysing, empathising, researching and participating.

Students are required to study a minimum of 400 hours in human society and its environment over years 7 to 10, of

which 100 must comprise Australian history and 100 Australian geography. Additional studies include history, geography, Asian social studies, commerce and studies in society. Schools may offer combined courses.

In years 11 and 12, electives include Aboriginal studies, ancient history, business studies, economics, general studies, geography, legal studies, modern history, society and culture and studies in religion. Schools may also develop and offer other endorsed studies. For years 7–10, courses in studies of religion and Aboriginal studies are being developed.

The arts

This key learning area, called creative arts in New South Wales, covers visual arts and the performing arts of dance, drama and music. The Board of Studies introduced a number of new syllabuses in this key learning area in 1991. These were years 11–12 2/3-unit classical ballet, 2-unit dance and 2-unit drama. Considerable curriculum development is occurring in years 7–10 visual arts and music to provide mandatory 100-hour courses and the opportunity for additional studies in these subjects. Work commenced on the K–6 creative and practical arts syllabus, which will be available from 1994.

Health

The key learning area of health includes personal development, health, physical education and career education. Study of the Board's integrated personal development, health and physical education syllabus for approximately 300 hours is mandatory for the School Certificate from year 7 in 1992.

During 1991 the Board of Studies developed new syllabuses in this area. A 2-unit course in personal development, health and physical education for years 11–12 was implemented in 1991. A syllabus and support materials for personal development, health and physical education for years 7–10 were sent to schools for implementation in 1992. Work on the K–6 personal development, health and physical education syllabus and support materials commenced in June 1991.

The Department of School Education has responded to the needs of senior students in this key learning area by requiring them to study 25 hours of personal development and health over years 11 and 12, from 1992. This course will be school based and drawn from the 2-unit personal development, health and physical education syllabus for years 11–12.

The department is also committed to HIV/AIDS education as part of its support for the personal, social and intellectual development of students. The initial training of regional resource officers was completed in 1991 and 120 teachers Statewide upgraded their skills in HIV/AIDS education. Teaching materials were also developed to support the implementation of HIV/AIDS education.

Preventative drug education remains a focus of attention for the Department of School Education. Since 1985 government schools have been provided with policy guidelines, consultancy, in-service and resources to assist in the development and implementation of preventative drug education programs. The main aims of these programs are to reduce the prevalence of harmful drug use and the occurrence of behaviour leading to harm associated with drug use. Each school is expected to prepare and carry out its own program for drug education, within the context of departmental policy. The effectiveness of the programs is evaluated every three years through a survey of student drug use. The next survey is scheduled for 1992.

Student outcomes

The Board of Studies developed learning outcomes statements for all secondary syllabuses and for those primary syllabuses either recently endorsed or under development. These statements will assist teachers to plan teaching programs and to identify outcomes that relate to a given level of student achievement. This initiative will allow schools, the department and the Board of Studies to assess student learning more effectively as defined by the individual syllabus outcomes. As a consequence, schools will be able to report student achievement using a common framework as an integral part of their annual review programs.

At the State level the use of these data from a sample of schools when aggregated, together with a range of additional indicators, will assist the system to monitor the results of its curriculum support programs and to plan to meet existing and future needs.

Basic Skills Testing Program

The Basic Skills Testing (BST) Program, introduced by the NSW Government in 1989, was conducted for the third year in 1991. This annual program monitors the performance of year 3 and year 6 students in aspects of literacy and numeracy. The results provide important Statewide measures of primary-school student outcomes.

These measures are used to monitor standards and to assist the development of strategies for improving performance in the basic skills. In addition, the BST results are used by schools to compare their own performance with the overall State performance, to review school programs and to identify groups of students in need of additional specialised teaching. Individual student reports inform parents about the attainments of their children. Results are reported in skill bands, with four skill bands identified and described in both years 3 and 6. Band 4 indicates the highest level of skills achieved on the tests. The average performance of the entire year 3 and year 6 population and its various subgroups was higher in 1991 than in 1990 for all aspects of literacy and numeracy.

Specifically the 1991 results of the Basic Skills Testing Program showed the following:

- In year 3 more than 99.8 per cent of students were able to answer sufficient questions to be placed in one of the four skill bands for literacy and numeracy. The majority of students (64 per cent for literacy and 68 per cent for numeracy) demonstrated enough skills to be placed in one of the two top bands.
- In year 6 more than 99.6 per cent of students were able to answer enough questions to be placed in one of the four bands for the aspects of literacy test and more than 99 per cent for the aspects of numeracy test. For four of the five aspects of both literacy and numeracy, 30 per cent or more students were placed in the top band. In language 25 per cent of students were placed in the top band.
- As in previous years, girls scored noticeably higher than boys in literacy in year 3 and year 6. In year 3 girls slightly outperformed boys in numeracy, while boys scored slightly higher than girls in year 6. (The year 6 aspects of numeracy test contains more measurement and space items than the year 3 test.)
- Results for two other identified target groups—NESB students, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students—also improved in 1991 relative to the previous year's scores. However, the literacy and numeracy scores of both groups of NESB students in year 3 and year 6 were below those of all English-speaking students.

Mean scores for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, with the exception of number and space items in the year 6 numeracy test, remain considerably lower than mean scores for all other students. These results have prompted an evaluation, to be carried out in 1992, focused on the appropriateness and effectiveness of support programs in literacy and numeracy for Aboriginal students, and on whether resources allocated are reaching students most in need.

Senior secondary schooling

An ACER study in 1991 for the Department of School Education, of senior secondary schooling in New South Wales, identified several factors that correlated with student achievement. Amongst these factors were student views of school life, breadth of curriculum provision, subject choice combinations, approaches to learning, staff expectations of students and student self-rated achievement. This information provided some signposts for identifying and developing effective schools.

Teaching and learning

Recruitment

In the 1990–91 government school staffing operation, 376 new graduates were recruited on the basis of merit, to take up appointment in 1991. The success of this initiative, in attracting the best graduating teacher trainees for the public education system, led to 600 graduates being recruited in 1991, to take up duties in 1992, predominantly to schools in regions which are more difficult to staff.

Catholic schools generally do not have problems with staff recruitment, although some schools and areas have difficulties in recruiting qualified specialist teachers for LOTE, science and technology, and personal development, health and physical education.

Incentives to teach in remote areas

A range of incentives to ensure full staffing of government schools in remote or less favourable areas of the State will be available in 1992. The incentives were developed as a result of a trial begun in 1990 and an evaluation in 1991. The current package of incentives includes:

- a locality allowance to offset the higher cost of living in specified localities;
- the commencement of term 1 for schools in the western division of the State one week later than in other schools;
- the retention of the transfer points system for remote schools;
- additional professional development days for staff in remote schools;
- a 20 per cent rental subsidy for teachers in very remote schools.

Child-care assistance to teachers

During 1991 the Department of School Education established its first child-care centres, at Madang Avenue school in Metropolitan West region and Nuwarra school in Metropolitan South West region. Their establishment is one of the strategies for obtaining full staffing in outer metropolitan areas.

The centres operate on a user-pays system, for children from birth to school age, 5 days a week, 7.45 am to 5 pm, 48 weeks a year. Nuwarra child-care centre, despite its recent establishment, had 20 children enrolled, and was already showing its value for teachers.

Permanent part-time work

Permanent part-time work involves a teacher working the equivalent of one to four days per week.

Following the success of the permanent part-time work trial conducted from 1988 to 1990, an extended program

for various forms of part-time work was conducted during 1991. The program provided up to 2,250 equivalent full-time positions or 4,500 actual teaching positions, equivalent to 5 per cent of the overall teaching workforce.

In 1991, women made up 97 per cent of permanent part-time teachers. Because teachers undertaking permanent part-time work can accrue on a pro-rata basis the same benefits as full-time teachers, the working conditions of many women, who previously had long-term regular casual teaching work, have improved significantly. For teachers wishing to work part-time for up to two years, part-time leave without pay is available, with right of return to the previous full-time position. Maternity leave may also be taken on a part-time basis, to the beginning of the term following the baby's second birthday, in which case right of return to the full-time position is assured.

Human resource development

A significant change in recent years in the government school sector has been the devolution of responsibility for most human resource development to schools and regional offices. In 1991, $13 million (61 per cent of the funds for human resource development) was allocated directly to schools, a threefold increase over 1990. Regional offices were allocated $5.3 million (25 per cent) with the remainder (14 per cent) used to support the implementation of Statewide initiatives. School and regional decision making on expenditure for human resource development, in the context of departmental priorities, meant that local programs were offered in response to local needs. State office support for these programs shifted to focus on the formulation of Statewide policy, plans and programs to support school-based professional development.

To support the devolution of funds for human resource development, a wide range of materials was produced to assist schools.

In 1991 nine retraining courses were conducted by the Department of School Education for 175 participants in the areas of English as a second language (ESL), teacher-librarianship, support teacher (learning difficulties) and for teachers of Aboriginal studies. Professional development courses, where much of the training occurred at the school level over one semester, were provided for 140 teachers in ESL, teacher-librarianship and special education. In addition, 56 ESL teachers were sponsored to undertake university graduate diplomas and certificate courses in ESL teaching.

In the Catholic sector all schools and systems emphasise in-service activities for teachers before implementation of organisational and curriculum initiatives, as well as providing ongoing professional support for all curriculum areas by way of subject support materials, staff development days and in-service courses. Curriculum-based initiatives also focus on assessment, evaluation, student outcomes, learning contexts and classroom management.

Diocesan education offices have subject advisers to support schools and teachers.

Catholic diocesan education offices implemented a whole-school review process by which the school can see itself as a self-renewing entity and provide a sound base for teacher induction, performance appraisal, registration procedures, review of promotions positions and generally a process for locating renewal close to the point of implementation.

The Catholic education offices have established positions with responsibility for teacher in-service, curriculum support, appointments and industrial matters, and school and teacher appraisal.

The Association of Independent Schools provides an extensive range of professional development programs for years K–12 to support the diverse needs of the independent sector. The focus is on within-school support through the employment of curriculum specialists and accessing appropriate expertise within independent schools. During 1991 the emphasis was on mathematics K–8, and science and technology K–6. Also new special learning mode courses have been developed which emphasise the within-schools model. The reorganisation of the curriculum into key learning areas and the development of new syllabuses has resulted in initiatives relating to issues, such as student outcomes, appropriate assessment and curriculum strategies, and classroom management.

Technology in teaching

Computer rooms are increasing in number and usage in government and non-government schools. Extensive in-service courses were conducted to extend teacher familiarity with computers and with their potential classroom applications. Work has begun with the use of technology-assisted distance education via modems, facsimile machines and voicepoint networks. The OASIS computerised school administration and library systems have widespread application throughout schools.

Resourcing schools

Recurrent funds

Recurrent funds from State and Commonwealth sources were allocated by the Treasurer in three program areas:

- preschool and primary education in government and non-government schools;
- secondary education in government and non-government schools;
- administrative, professional and general support services.

Funds within each program area were further classified as:

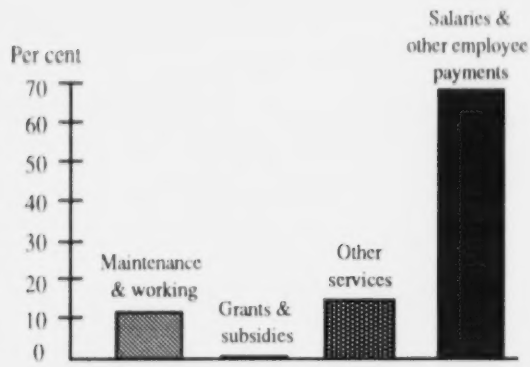
- salaries and other employee payments;
- operating expenses;

- grants and subsidies;
- other services.

The Department of School Education budget program structure was under review as part of a Statewide initiative involving the review of programs.

In 1990–91 expenditure from all sources on recurrent services was $3.269 billion, of which $3.129 billion was spent on primary and secondary programs for schools and students. The balance ($140 million) was used for administrative and central educational support, including teacher development and the education of students with disabilities.

Figure 6. NSW Department of School Education recurrent expenditure total funds, 1990–91(a)



(a) Recurrent expenditure excludes capital works and services, and special deposits account expenditure.

Source: NSW Department of School Education, *Annual Report*, 1991

Capital funds for government schools

In 1990–91 a total of $204.8 million was met from the consolidated fund, of which $85.8 million related to primary programs, $118.7 million to secondary programs and $0.3 million to administrative programs. These capital funds were used for building works, land acquisitions and the purchase and installation of plant and equipment. In addition, $28.0 million was expended from special deposits funding for works met from asset sales proceeds and joint ventures ($9.5 million) to support the introduction of computer technology for school administration ($12.5 million) and the repair or replacement of fire-damaged buildings and equipment ($6.0 million).

Building works activities relate to major construction for both new and existing government schools. The purchase and installation of plant and equipment include items related to the purchase of school furniture and equipment, upgrading of facilities, e.g. electrical and heating installations, dust extraction, septic and sewerage installations, and upgrading for health and safety needs.

Other initiatives

Overseas exchanges and visits

The Department of School Education has the executive role for the NSW Registration Committee for International Secondary Student Exchanges, which registers and monitors exchange organisations. There are 20 organisations and 31 schools currently registered to operate student exchanges in New South Wales. Approximately 600 students from more than 40 countries are hosted in Australia each year, while some 700 NSW students experience life and education in overseas countries.

There is an increasing number of overseas student visits to NSW government schools. The Overseas Visits Program provides student groups, which have ranged from 4 to as many as 600 students, with cultural and educational experiences. The program is run on a cost-recovery basis, with some financial assistance to participating schools.

International Students Program

The International Students Program is a successful entrepreneurial program in which fee-paying students from overseas are enrolled in NSW government high schools which have excess capacity. Students can apply for any high school other than a selective high school.

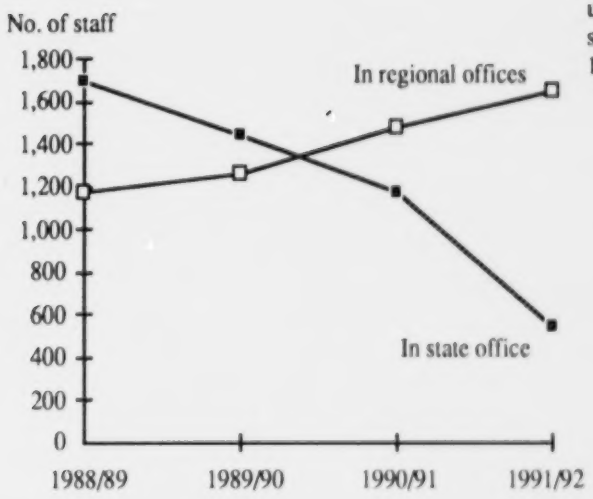
The program began in 1989 and has grown so that currently 286 overseas students are enrolled in 96 high schools. Students have come from 12 countries in Asia, 3 in the Pacific, and from the USA and the Middle East. In 1991, 85 per cent of year 12 overseas students in government high schools were offered university places.

Although there are overseas students to be found in all ten education regions of the State, most students are enrolled in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong. Continued promotional activities emphasising school quality, choice and diversity are expected to increase the number of such students in future years.

Restructuring

In 1991 the Department of School Education entered its third year of implementation of the School Renewal Strategy, elaborated in *School-Centred Education*, a report commissioned by the Government. During this period of implementation the department's State office has been considerably reduced, regional offices have grown in size and assumed responsibility for much of the operational management previously done centrally, and the devolution of decision making to schools has been significant. Figure 7 shows the reshaping of the department's structure and the devolution to regions.

Figure 7. Department of School Education, State and regional office restructuring, 1988–91



Source: NSW Department of School Education, *Annual Report*, 1991

Government school priorities for 1992

The nine priorities which were chosen to guide planning in the government sector in 1991 were replaced at the end of the year by ten priorities for 1992. These priorities will be used to guide the progress of the government school system and as a basis for accountability. The priorities for 1992 are:

- curriculum implementation in the key learning areas;
- the educational and welfare needs of students;
- multicultural perspectives in programs, policies and practices;
- access to and participation in post-compulsory education;
- equity for students with special needs;
- local decision making;
- community participation in schools;
- career structures, staff development and welfare;
- technology for teaching, learning and communication;

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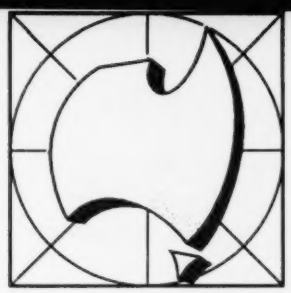


Introduction

With more than 25 per cent of the nation's schools and students, Victoria supports the second largest school education system in Australia. In 1991 there was a total of 2,712 schools, comprising 2,030 schools in the government system, 502 schools in the Catholic system and 180 schools in the independent sector. Altogether, there were 789,513 students enroled in Victorian schools in August 1991, with 533,386 of these in the government school system.

The Office of Schools Administration (OSA), which had been part of the Ministry of Education and Training, was replaced in the latter part of 1991 by the Department of School Education (DSE), a full administrative agency in its own right with responsibility for primary and secondary schooling. At the same time, the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training was formed with responsibility for further education, vocational education and training, and higher education. The substance of this report relates to the area of responsibility covered by the DSE.

Priority objectives for 1991

Government schools

The education objectives for the government school system in Victoria have been set out in the strategic plan entitled *Planning for Successful Schooling, Victorian State Schools 1992–1994*, which was released in July 1991. The five objectives set out in the plan were:

- to expand educational opportunities for all school students;
- to strengthen community participation in, and satisfaction with, the State school system;
- to encourage excellence in all aspects of student learning;
- to improve career structure, performance and morale of teaching, administrative and support staff;
- to manage resources in ways which maximise educational benefits for all students.

Catholic schools

The principles and objectives for Catholic schools in 1991 were:

- to provide high-quality education for all young Catholic people in a context which includes the Catholic dimension, an understanding of work in society and cooperative relationships with others;
- to improve access to a comprehensive and work-related curriculum by maximising student retention and encouraging participation and achievement of students who are disadvantaged or have a disability;
- to ensure that the assessment, recording and reporting practices provide comprehensive and accurate information on student development to students and their parents;
- to foster participation of the community, especially parents, teachers and students, in forming policy at the school, diocesan and State levels.

Independent schools

Independent schools generally subscribed to the following principles:

- to provide an excellent education for all young people by developing their talents and capacities to full potential;
- to develop in students the following attributes: physical and personal health, a knowledge of languages other than English, skills of information processing and computing, and skills of literacy and numeracy;
- to improve links with the school community, including the provision of better feedback;
- to maximise the competence, confidence and efficiency of teachers;
- to promote equality of education opportunities, and to provide for groups with special learning requirements;

- to provide Aboriginal students with an understanding and respect for cultural heritage including maintaining Aboriginal culture and language.

State priorities and AEC national goals

To achieve the five education objectives, the DSE specified eleven priority tasks for 1991. These were:

- implementation of the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE);
- district provision and school reorganisation;
- linking education and training;
- integration and special education;
- accountability and reporting;
- excellence for all;
- literacy and numeracy;
- emphasis on LOTE and technology;
- curriculum development;
- further devolution;
- improving quality of teaching.

The priority tasks relate directly to the Australian Education Council Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia, and are an important means of implementing these national goals at the State level. Firstly, the national goals concerned with issues of excellence and equity are addressed through tasks directed towards the implemen- tation of excellence for all, district provision and school reorganisation, and integration and special education.

Secondly, the national goals focusing on the areas of student learning and on general and vocational learning are addressed by the priority tasks related to the implementation of the VCE and to linking education and training, and curriculum development, as well as through initiatives concerned with literacy, numeracy, LOTE and technology.

Thirdly, the national goals concerned with teaching and learning and the resourcing of schools are addressed by the priority tasks for implementing quality of teaching, further devolution, and accountability and reporting.

The general thrust of the priority tasks identified for government schools, and the relationship of these tasks to the national goals, were taken up by both Catholic and independent sectors, particularly in relation to the introduction of the VCE.

Excellence and equity

A ministerial statement entitled *Victoria: Education for Excellence*, which was released in May 1991, establishes a framework for meeting the challenges of the 1990s.The key priorities are:

- linking education and training;
- excellence for all;
- literacy and numeracy;
- languages and technology;
- accountability and reporting.

A Ministerial Taskforce for Excellence has been established for the purpose of developing strategies to ensure that all Victorian students are challenged and extended in their studies. The first stage of the task force's work involves analysing current practices in Victoria, as well as in other States and countries, aimed at encouraging high achievement in all areas of the curriculum. Pilot programs will be trialled during 1992. The second stage involves implementing those methods which are most relevant to Victorian government schools.

The task force will work closely with the State Board of Education in complementing ongoing activity within the DSE. Its activities are to be focused on students in years 6–10, on studies of English, mathematics, science and languages and on increased demands and expectations placed on students by the introduction of the Victorian Certificate of Education.

Retention rates to year 12

In August 1991 the apparent retention rate in government schools was 71 per cent, representing a 13 per cent increase over 1990. Thus, the retention rate to year 12 in the government sector over the period extending from 1986 to 1991 has shown an overall increase of 33.5 per cent. The Catholic system and the independent sector, both of which entered 1991 with a higher retention rate than the government sector, recorded increases of 9.4 per cent and 6.5 per cent respectively.

The apparent retention rate for Victorian schools is set out in Table 1.

Table 1. Apparent retention rate for Victorian schools by sector, July 1986–91 (per cent)

Sector	*1986*	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*
Government	37.5	44.0	48.2	52.7	57.8	71.0
Catholic	61.6	60.5	65.6	66.1	68.0	72.0
Independent	99.7	94.1	98.7	100.2	104.9	106.2
All schools	**47.7**	**52.6**	**57.0**	**60.6**	**65.3**	**75.6**

Source: DSE Census data

Taken over the period 1981–91, the number of students in year 12 in Victoria over all school sectors grew from 22,573 to 50,576, an increase of 124 per cent. The increase in retention has been particularly marked in government

schools, where the year 12 enrolment grew from 12,111 students in 1981 to 31,344 students in 1991, an increase of 259 per cent.

There was a further increase in the apparent retention rate for females in government schools which in August 1991 reached 79.3 per cent, an increase of over 12 per cent when compared with the preceding year. The retention rate for females was nearly 16 per cent more than that for males (63.5 per cent), due in part to boys entering apprenticeships and other areas of vocational education and training. In the non-government sector, the apparent retention rate for females in 1991 was 90 per cent compared to 78 per cent for males.

Age participation rates

Table 2 indicates that Victoria achieves higher than national participation rates for students at school and attending higher education establishments and matches the national rate for participation in TAFE.

Effective schools

The Whole School Approach to Discipline and Student Welfare

The Whole School Approach to Discipline and Student Welfare, which was developed in 1991, is a management and professional development program conducted within the school to assist it in developing a set of welfare and discipline procedures which are practical and can be implemented consistently by all staff. Within the framework of indicators of effective schools, the Whole School Approach to Discipline and Student Welfare addresses key organisational and teaching and learning issues. Outcomes concerned with leadership, decision making, school climate (conducive to learning), staff expectations of students and ways of engaging students in learning activities are attained through processes involving the whole school community.

The program has three major related aims:

- to improve the school 'climate' and operations;
- to reduce discipline-related problems experienced by teachers;
- to reduce levels of stress among teachers and, over time, to reduce the costs associated with stress related WorkCare claims and sick leave.

The program involves the direct intervention by School Support Centre facilitators in withdrawing a core group of up to 15 elected staff members for 5 days and looking at the whole discipline/welfare picture of a school, its strengths, problems and weaknesses and, from this, developing procedures which meet school needs.

Initial data from schools involved in a pilot study indicate a 54 per cent decrease in teacher stress claims and a 34 per cent decrease in all other WorkCare claims in the 18 months following the establishment of the program.

Community participation

Victoria has taken the view that schools will reach higher levels of student achievement and, at the same time, make more effective use of resources if they are able to draw on an educational partnership between parents, teachers and students.

An example of this partnership is seen in the move towards incorporating in the Schools Grant the urgent and minor maintenance works allocation for schools. A pilot program was established in the Western Metropolitan region, with all schools receiving allocations based on entitlements, building type and the length of time since major maintenance work had last been undertaken. A Regional Reference Committee, which was established to assist with the implementation of the program, initiated a substantial in-service program involving principals and school council

Table 2. Age participation rate in education and training of 15–19-year-olds (per cent)

	15 years		*16 years*		*17 years*		*18 years*		*19 years*	
	Vic.	*Aust.*	*Vic.*	*Aust.*	*Vic.*	*Aust.*	*Vic.*	*Aust.*	*Vic.*	*Aust.*
School	98.1	95.8	91.1	84.2	72.2	54.8	13.5	9.4	3.7	2.5
Higher education	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	2.4	5.9	25.2	23.1	23.7	24.3
TAFE	0.0	0.9	2.4	4.6	6.3	10.7	16.9	18.8	18.4	15.4
Other	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.3	1.4	1.3	1.1	2.3	1.8	2.0
Total	**98.1**	***97.0***	**93.5**	***89.3***	**82.3**	***72.8***	**56.7**	***53.5***	**47.5**	***45.3***

Source: ABS, *May Supplementary Survey of Transition from Education to Work in Australia*, Cat No. 6227.0

representatives from all 360 schools in the region. A preliminary evaluation indicated that schools have accepted the concept and are successfully managing their own urgent and minor maintenance works.

Developments towards promoting the partnership during the year included:

- review of the School Community Development Program and subsequent establishment of the School Community Participation Program to support parents and students in a curriculum partnership with staff;
- preparation of a School Council General Information Manual;
- provision of advice about education to parents through a shopfront and telephone advisory service known as Link-Ed.

Computerised Administrative Systems Environment for Schools (CASES)

The provision of support to schools in the use of CASES forms part of an information and reporting framework which includes the Victorian Profiles Program, the Students at Risk data and the Schools Asset Management System. In addition, CASES will streamline the collection of school-based statistical data and thus enhance the allocation of resources and forward planning.

There has been an increase in the number of schools using CASES, especially in non-metropolitan areas, with small schools being supported through the development of an 'entry level' version of the system. For example, the School Accounting System (SAS) and the Computer Aided Administration System, both of which are a part of CASES, have been installed in 1,227 and 1,170 schools respectively.

State issues affecting the quality of schooling

Student mobility

Between July 1989 and July 1990, 3,281 students moved from Victoria to overseas countries. There were 8,418 students who moved into the Victorian education system from overseas countries, resulting in a net gain of 5,137 students.

A total of 6,323 students left Victoria to attend schools in other States, while 6,608 students from other States moved into Victoria, resulting in a net gain of 285 students.

A total of 4,453 students moved from the government sector to the Catholic system, while 7,224 moved from the Catholic system to the government sector. A total of 6,471 students moved from the government sector to the independent sector, while 2,835 students moved from the independent sector, resulting in a net loss of 865 students or 0.16 per cent from the government sector. The Catholic school system experienced a net loss of 618 students, or 0.34 per cent, to independent schools.

School reorganisation and improving the quality of schooling

One of the priority tasks for the DSE in 1991 was District Provision and School Reorganisation which addresses two core education aims, namely, the provision of a comprehensive curriculum at the district level and ensuring access to quality education for all students.

There are now eighteen multi-campus colleges in existence with a senior campus for post-compulsory students linked with one or more junior secondary campuses. A major benefit of providing a senior campus arrangement is that it enables the provision of at least 32–35 of a possible 44 VCE studies compared with the situation in stand-alone schools, which were able to provide only 15–20 studies. The broader range of studies possible in multi-campus arrangements allows for expanded programs to be provided in the arts, business, science, humanities, technology, mathematics and languages.

Schools have been grouped into 102 districts across the State. Each year a significant number of districts is required to conduct a district review. The review is conducted in accordance with set procedures and focuses on conducting a curriculum audit of the programs available in the area.

A further 28 districts were identified for review, which brings to 56 the number of districts that have completed or are presently completing a review. The outcome of the reviews has resulted in a further 17 school reorganisation projects which are funded through the sale of redundant assets arising from school reorganisation.

Increasing public awareness

Schools Bulletin

The first edition of the *Schools Bulletin* was published in January 1991 as a fortnightly newsletter to improve communications between the central administrative area and schools. The *Schools Bulletin* provides information on curriculum, industrial and administrative matters, and also incorporates other items of correspondence such as executive memoranda and information usually sent through the bulk mail. Some 14,000 copies of the *Schools Bulletin* are distributed to all education outlets for circulation among teachers, school councils, ancillary staff and parents.

VCE

A program of VCE public-awareness exhibitions was undertaken in environmental education, science and mathematics and textiles. The program was also supported by a series of seminars and performances by school dance, drama and orchestral groups.

Education Week and Children's Week

State Education Week is held to highlight the achievements of government schools. The theme for 1991, 'State

Schools are Great Schools', was supported by the subtheme 'Achieving Excellence'. Activities were held in schools and their local communities and were augmented by events organised by school support centres and regional offices, as well as by major displays of student works, feature articles, supplements in newspapers and community service announcements on radio and television.

The theme for Children's Week in 1991 was 'Our Planet: Our Future'. Events, which involved children of all age groups, culminated in the Children's Parliament held within the historic House of Assembly chamber at Parliament House. The week is planned by a committee comprising representatives from government ministries and departments as well as community and welfare groups.

Link-Ed

The DSE has opened a shopfront information service, known as Link-ED, to provide information and advice on education matters to parents, school councillors and the community. An outreach program in conjunction with the Department of Labour provided information and organised displays in the central city mall. Link-Ed also links callers with relevant central or regional personnel for more detailed advice and information.

Catholic education assemblies

A review of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria recommended wider communication and consultation with the Catholic community concerning education matters. During 1991 the first education assembly was held in each of the four dioceses, with up to 250 participants. In future years there will be two education assemblies in each diocese, and one Victorian education assembly.

Independent schools

Schools within the independent sector adopted such strategies as organising forums for parents and the local community to discuss the effects of educational change, utilising community expertise in determining school policy, scheduling regular open days to inform the local community about school activities, organising camps for families of students and reviewing reporting mechanisms.

Equity initiatives

In Victoria, particular importance has been placed on redressing areas of disadvantage. The sections which follow outline a selection of the initiatives being taken for this purpose.

Education in isolated settings

A number of forms of curriculum delivery at Statewide, regional, school cluster and individual college levels are being used to improve access to a comprehensive VCE in isolated settings.

Telematics, which encompasses all electronically based communications, provides a vital service in the provision of curriculum in isolated locations, particularly at the VCE level and for specialised subject areas such as languages other than English (LOTE). Up to 375 hours of telematics-delivered instruction is provided to 105 schools each week, including some non-government schools. In addition, telematics services support the professional development of teachers in isolated settings.

Telematics services are also used by the Distance Education Centre, formerly the Correspondence School, in providing telelessons and teletutorials in a range of courses, particularly in languages and music, to students in rural secondary colleges.

Tekpaks are used for delivering technology-based subjects in isolated schools which generally do not have technology facilities.

The Country Education Project

The Country Education Project is the Victorian component of the Commonwealth-funded Country Areas Program. In 1991 the project worked in 14 areas and with 3 new clusters across Victoria. This involved 257 government and non-government schools and over 27,000 students. The allocation for Victoria in 1991 was $1,998,000.

During 1991 the project initiated a review process. This enabled the project to document and report on the range of programs under nine key educational priority areas. The review clearly indicated that, at both the area and Statewide levels, the project is making significant contributions to literacy, VCE implementation, community participation, comprehensive curriculum provision and networking between schools. The review also identified areas for future planning and action. LOTE and numeracy are two such areas.

Priorities for 1991 included:

- support for the development of technology studies in primary and post-primary schools through the Energy Breakthrough Program;
- research into the needs of rural young people who leave school before completing year 12;
- literacy, including the role of the parent–school partnership in addressing this issue;
- improvement in the provision of primary science through the *Group Activities in Primary Science (GAPS)* kit;
- support for the implementation of the VCE in small, rural secondary schools;
- the development of resource materials suitable for primary-school students that look at issues relating to lifestyles and work education;
- environmental programs that link schools and rural communities.

Integration

Regular government school settings now accommodate 4,912 students with disabilities. This level of integration has been made possible by increasing to 442 EFT (equivalent full-time) the number of integration teachers and also increasing the number of integration aides to 1,115 EFT.

In the Catholic school sector, 1,208 students with disabilities were accommodated in 365 regular schools on a full-time or part-time basis. Support for these students was provided from the School Support (Non-Government) element of the Commonwealth Special Education Program, as well as a specific allocation of General Recurrent Grants for primary schools. In 1991 the provision of Level 12 funding for all students being integrated into regular schools increased Commonwealth support for integration in Catholic schools by approximately 12.6 per cent.

In non-government, non-Catholic schools in 1991, Commonwealth funding of $443,860 was utilised to assist the integration of 253 students with disabilities into regular classrooms in 81 schools. Approximately 200 students with disabilities were integrated into regular classrooms without Commonwealth assistance.

The educational services for students with disabilities and impairments have been more closely tied with the provision of education at a district level to enable a more rational approach to the provision of services and hence to the use of resources currently devoted to this area.

The Inclusive Schooling—Integration (ISI) Program has progressed to Stage 2 through its introduction in about 160 schools. This program takes the overall integration program a step further through developing a culture in schools based on providing access and success for all students irrespective of disability or impairment. The ISI Program has attracted the interest of the Catholic Education Office in Victoria, the Tasmanian Department of Education and several universities in the United States and Canada.

The Catholic Education Office has trained a number of personnel as leaders and has developed a pilot program to trial the ISI Program and evaluate its suitability for and effectiveness in Catholic schools during 1992.

Other developments in integration included:

- development of a three-year strategic plan;
- the transfer to the DSE of a further seven Day Training Centres;
- the establishment of a cross-agency project with Community Services Victoria and the State Training Board for the purpose of making more age-appropriate provision for students aged 18 or older who currently attend government special schools.

Intervention support—joint (government and non-government)

Priorities for 1991 were:

- the provision of early intervention services to young children with disabilities, including the integration of children into regular preschools;
- the provision of services to school-aged students with severe disabilities;
- the provision of educational and related services to children (with and without disabilities) in residential care.

The allocation for Victoria in 1991 was $3,358,000.

Schools support—non-government

Priorities for 1991 were:

- the integration of special needs students into regular classes and schools;
- support of Statewide services provided by non-government agencies for students with disabilities, such as the therapy services provided by Spastic and Yooralla Societies;
- recurrent grants for non-government special schools.

The allocation for Victoria in 1991 was $7,548,000.

Deaf education review

A task force has been investigating the facilities needs for deaf students in primary schools and secondary colleges with a view, in particular, to establishing facilities in regular schools. This investigation is part of the Minister's response to the recommendations that arose from the review *Education for Students Who Are Deaf in Victorian Government Schools.*

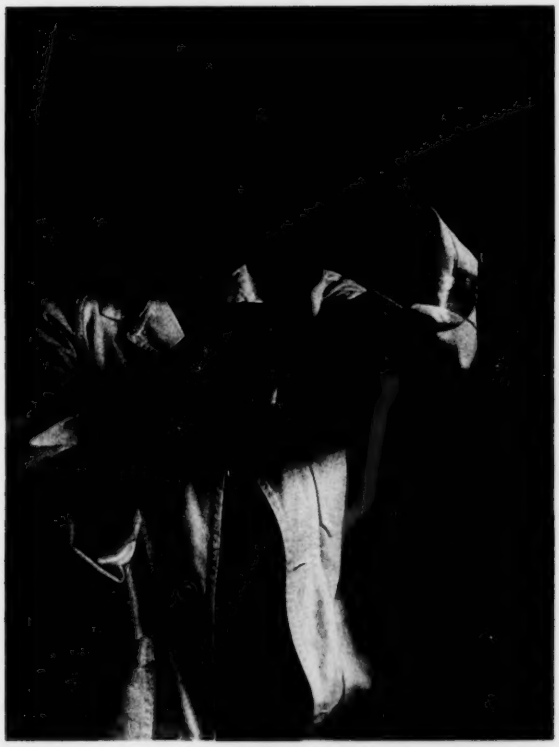
Education of girls

The Education of Girls Program supports the implementation of the Equal Opportunity Action Plan for Girls in Education 1991–1993 and other related DSE priorities. The program provides a framework for the provision of policy advice, the production of curriculum materials and the implementation of policy and guidelines which aim to improve the education experiences of girls. It is intended that there should be progressive incorporation of these objectives into all areas of the curriculum.

Initiatives within the program include:

- the *Women Talk Work Register*, which is a register of women in non-traditional occupations which aims to broaden the career aspirations and expectations of girls and to encourage them to consider non-traditional occupations;

- the Statewide Equal Opportunity Resource Centre;
- Hypatia's Place: Maths, Science and Technology Education Centre for Girls, which conducts professional development programs to broaden the post-school options of girls by increasing their participation in maths, science and technology. The McClintock Collective project officer is based at Hypatia's Place.



In 1991–92 the Education for Girls Program participated in the review by the Australian Education Council of the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools. For the National Catholic Education Commission, the review was coordinated by the Catholic Education Office.

The *Equal Opportunity Newsletter* is published twice a year. It addresses the issues of gender-inclusive education and provides advice on implementing the Equal Opportunity Action Plan for Girls in Education 1991–1993.

Students at Risk Program

The Students at Risk Program is developing preventive approaches that support the provision of structures and curriculum that will provide pathways for students at risk to complete their secondary education.

Initiatives in 1991 included various projects linking the services provided by a range of government and non-government agencies to develop strategies for such purposes as enabling homeless students to complete their secondary schooling, supporting families and students in times of crisis, and providing young offenders with access to a comprehensive education and training. As well, telematics is being trialled in a non-metropolitan region—Loddon-Campaspe-Mallee region—to assist students at risk in isolated rural settings, and an area plan is being trialled in eight school districts.

Curriculum programs for students in disadvantaged settings

In 1991 priority action areas for the Commonwealth-funded Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) at the school level in Victorian government schools were literacy, numeracy, parent participation, programs to improve student understanding of society, and expressive arts.

Action being taken to reaffirm literacy and numeracy as prime curriculum priorities for all schools participating in DSP includes setting the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies as the minimum requirement. Further support for the work of consultants and schools was provided through the production of the *Literacy and Numeracy Resource Kit* and the *NESB Services Kit.*

During 1991 the Victorian Non-Government Disadvantaged Schools Program identified the following program priorities:

- achievement of long-term whole-school change through the development of an integrated action plan;
- provision of professional development for teachers, principals and parents;
- effective parent and community participation;
- development of systematic links and a supportive system of networking;
- the effective sharing of information.

Koorie students

There were 2,779 Koorie students in government schools in 1991, with 60.2 per cent enrolled in primary schools. The number of Koorie students in government schools per year-level in 1991 was relatively constant from the preparatory year to year 9, ranging from 226 to 266. However, after year 9 there was a decline in numbers of Koorie students enrolled in schooling.

The Victorian and Commonwealth governments entered into partnership with the Koorie people to produce the Victorian Koorie education policy, Partnership in Education, which will serve to extend access to and improve educational outcomes for Koorie students. The Victorian plan aims to:

- ensure that all Victorian Koorie children attend at least one year of preschool education;
- increase the number of Koorie students staying on to complete years 11 and 12;
- develop resource material which is more culturally relevant for Koorie students;
- encourage all students to become more aware of Koorie history and culture;
- increase the employment of Koorie people in the education system and boost Koorie involvement in education decision making;
- improve the graduation rates of Koorie people from TAFE and higher education courses.

A project on resources and educational experiences of Koorie students examined the nature and extent of resources devoted to the education of Koories and on the educational experiences and outcomes of Koorie students. There were four components to the study: resource inputs, educational experiences, case studies of particular programs and establishment of a database.

Other initiatives include the establishment of homework centres across the State, provision of supplementary programs for Koorie students through a network of inner-suburban schools, and support for eight Koorie people to undertake teacher training.

Within the independent schools sector there are two Koorie community schools, which aim to provide students with an understanding of and respect for their cultural heritage—including maintaining Koorie culture and language—while developing the students' talents and capacities.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB)

In August 1991 there was a total of 133,750 NESB students attending government schools, or 25.1 per cent of total enrolments. NESB students were concentrated in the metropolitan regions, with 89.5 per cent attending schools in these areas. On a Statewide basis, they were equally represented in primary and secondary schools, while a small percentage (1.8 per cent) attended special and language schools.

A range of programs has been developed for NESB students. These programs include curriculum development guides for ESL programs for the junior primary, secondary literacy and secondary beginner stages, and selected VCE studies; modelling approaches for teaching selected VCE studies to ESL students; and participation in the national project to develop English language proficiency scales for ESL students. The ESL curriculum-related publication *No English: Don't Panic* was published in October 1991.

The distribution of General Support funds for the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program continues to be based on data derived from a Language Learning Survey conducted in 1983. This survey is now out of date and, in any case, it is felt it would be preferable for the Program to be resourced more on the basis of needs. Work is proceeding on the development of ESL profiles as a more appropriate measure for funding purposes.

The Commonwealth allocation for the Victorian Catholic ESL General Support Program for 1991 was $4,726,000, which provided for 97.8 primary and 27.1 secondary equivalent full time (EFT) teachers. The New Arrivals Program enabled 18.1 primary and 2.9 secondary EFT teachers to be appointed directly to schools.

In 1991 there were 676 students who qualified for support under the Victorian Catholic ESL New Arrivals Program. The Commonwealth allocation of $1,668,320 enabled 30 teachers to be employed centrally to provide program support for these students.

In 1991, 27 independent schools received Commonwealth funding under the General element of the ESL Program. Six schools received funding under the New Arrivals element of the program.

Other equity programs

Other initiatives undertaken in 1991 included the following:

- A report is being developed by the DSE on participation in different curriculum areas of male and female students, students from different social backgrounds, students from different immigrant backgrounds, rural and urban students, and Koorie students. A similar study was undertaken by the Catholic Education Office in association with the State Board of Education. The study produced valuable information about participation in the various curriculum areas by the various groupings of students.
- A project entitled *Resources and Education Experiences of Immigrant Australians* examined the resources provided for students in each of the groups identified in the Social Justice Framework. It aimed to provide information to assist the expansion of educational opportunities for all students, particularly NESB students.

General and vocational education

The ministerial statement entitled *Victoria: Education for Excellence* identified the linking of education and training as a key priority. Following the release of the Finn Report, a second ministerial statement, *Pathways to Success*, then determined the terms of reference for the ministerial task force proposed in Victoria: Education for Excellence.

The task force is to advise on such matters as the identification of vocational programs in the VCE, ways of improving transition rates into training, the study of work in years 10 and 11, and methods of extending the integration of the study of work into the curriculum.

The Finn Report also stressed the importance of integrating study and work through such options as incorporating relevant part-time work in a full-time study program. Further to this, the Task Force on Pathways in Education and Training favoured a shift from current approaches to work experience, which are seen as emphasising observation of the work process, to a more structured approach which has a clear curriculum focus and is closely linked to the credentials of both school and the vocational training sector.

In 1991 the DSE received funding from the Department of Labour to pilot a school–work placement program. The participants were year 11 students, particularly those at risk of not completing school, who spent one day a week or a block placement in a workplace. Students, employers and teachers negotiated an agreement that allowed students to undertake VCE work requirements relevant to their industry placements. The emphasis in this program, which had a primary aim of demonstrating how the VCE could be used flexibly, was on developing strong links between school and work.

Significant progress has been made towards realising the vocational outcomes of the VCE though credit transfer arrangements with TAFE award courses. A range of VCE studies was accepted for credit in TAFE courses covering five fields: engineering; hospitality and tourism; electrical/electronics; art and design; and office and secretarial. Arrangements are in progress to extend this to building and construction; automotive; textile, clothing and footwear; and agriculture and horticulture. Forty secondary colleges piloted the credit transfer arrangements in 1991.

Opportunities for students to learn in the workplace are offered in the VCE, with 15 of the 44 study designs either recommending or requiring that school–industry contact take place.

There is a series of special programs and services in Victoria which assist students or teachers to make industry links. Knowbiz, a joint initiative supported by the DSE and private industry, coordinates visits to industry by students. Knowbiz involves 430 businesses and, in 1991, over 18,000 students and 1,200 teachers took part in visits to industry. Another program, Project School Industry, has undertaken a number of schemes to broaden teachers' knowledge of the workplace, particularly by encouraging individual schools to link with local industry. The kit Managing Workplace Links, which was published and disseminated in 1991, uses examples of these links to help schools and students make their own connections.

Increasingly, it is being recognised that teachers' understanding and involvement in industry is the key to successful education–industry links. The Teacher Release to Industry Program (TRIP) was set up in 1991, with 34 teachers participating, to provide direct experience in industry for teachers and principals. The program involves enrolling in a Graduate Certificate of Education offered by the teacher education faculty at Deakin University and a 39-week placement in industry. Employers involved range from large companies such as BHP and ALCOA to municipal councils and the Association for the Blind.

Victorian schools are adopting a team approach with the careers teacher and the year-level coordinators working together to present more comprehensive information on post-school options. The Job and Course Explorer database (JAC), which has become a key part of the course and career counselling process, is to be further developed, incorporating the National Occupational Descriptions and the Industry Information and Subject Search. JAC is complemented by the Jobs Illustrated database (JILL), which uses a compact disc system as a means of providing information.

In October 1991 the Minister established a Task Force on Pathways in Education and Training after the release of the ministerial statement *Pathways to Success*. The task force has been asked to report on a number of matters including:

- the implications for Victoria of major aspects of the Australian Education Council's review of *Young People's Participation in Post-Compulsory Education and Training* (the Finn Report):
- ways to increase the vocational capacity of the VCE;
- improving links between schools, the training sector, industry and universities.

The task force is to release a discussion paper and information paper early in 1992 for consideration by key school organisations, training and university sectors. A final report is to be completed by mid-year. The Catholic sector has had a significant involvement in the work of the task force.

Areas of student learning

There have been significant developments within each of the areas of student learning towards implementing the national goals. In particular, Victoria has given close attention to extending the use of profiles to cover all areas of English and mathematics, as well as looking towards realising the potential of profiles in other areas of learning.

English

In 1991 the Literacy Strategy involved initiatives to develop and disseminate the Victorian English Profiles, support early primary literacy education, implement intensive strategies for students experiencing difficulties in literacy and undertake professional development programs in post-primary years.

Trialling of the English profiles in schools has been conducted across all sectors and regions. These profiles have been extended to include spoken English as well as the strands of reading and writing. A document has been produced to support the implementation in schools of the profiles through an extensive professional development program which will be provided in primary schools in all sectors in 1992. Data collected in the Victorian Profiles Program has resulted in a comprehensive report on the achievements of all year 6 students and those students in social justice groups in reading, writing and spoken English.

The need for further development of teachers' understanding of early literacy development has been recognised, particularly in extending teachers' understanding of specific strategies to ensure the successful acquisition of literacy understanding by students from a range of backgrounds. Consolidation and further development of information contained in the Early Literacy In-service Course and the Reading Recovery Program has commenced through the Preparing for Literacy Program. The development and trialling of materials will continue into 1992.

The 100 Schools Project—Literacy Programs Study 1988–1991 reported on the factors (student, teacher, context and program) that influence student achievement in literacy. A complementary part of the project was a study of school effectiveness, especially those factors that promote a positive school climate. It is planned from 1992 to replace this program with the 150 Schools Project, which will also involve non-government schools.

Further development of programs to support students' continued literacy development in the content areas of post-primary education has been undertaken. Writing in the Subject Areas, developed initially by staff at the Catholic Education Office, assists subject teachers to understand and meet the literacy demands of their subject areas. The Making a Difference Program focuses on intensive support to year 7 students experiencing difficulty in literacy development. Teaching and learning issues related to post-primary literacy education are addressed within Helping Students to Learn. Extensive trialling of these programs in disadvantaged schools and associated materials development will continue into 1992. Support has been provided by the Commonwealth Literacy and Learning Program, and staff members from the Catholic Education Office have been seconded to the program.

Developments in languages other than English (LOTE)

The focus in 1991 was on establishing the foundation for the introduction of a second language as a core study for all students in secondary schools, to commence in 1992, and further encouraging the study of LOTE in government primary schools.

In 1991, 24 per cent of primary schools were providing some form of language program, representing an increase of 10 per cent since 1989. Most of these schools provide language programs at all levels from P–6 and over 57,000 primary students were learning a language. In secondary schools, 80 per cent of year 7 students and 72 per cent of year 8 students were studying a language other than English. LOTE is a compulsory study at years 7 and 8 in almost all secondary colleges offering such courses.

The Victorian School of Languages (VSL), which complements the provision of LOTE courses in schools, offers courses in 37 languages other than English in 21 centres across the State. In 1991 more than 10,500 secondary students were enrolled in such courses. Services have been extended in Berwick, Shepparton and Mildura towards meeting the needs of NESB students in outer metropolitan and rural locations.

Other initiatives included:

- the establishment of a Statewide LOTE planning group to assist schools to implement ministerial policy;
- the targeting of eight priority languages for training and retraining purposes. The languages are French, German, Japanese, Italian, Indonesian, Chinese, modern Greek and Vietnamese, which correspond to year 12 enrolment preferences, although training and retraining continue to be provided in other languages as well;
- the development of subject-based materials in Chinese, Italian and German;
- the development of courses and materials in Indonesian, French and German for delivery via distance education;
- the collection and analysis of data on teachers requiring training and retraining, which has resulted in the targeting of 140 teachers to undertake special courses;
- funding provided through the Country Education Program to assist in the delivery of LOTE training courses by telematics to country teachers and to support residential costs for those undertaking courses in metropolitan institutions;
- specially tailored LOTE method courses negotiated with Melbourne, Monash and LaTrobe universities and with Bendigo University College to meet ministry training needs. In addition, Bendigo University College is to provide a Bachelor of Education course in Indonesian from 1992, which will provide country teachers with better access to an Asian language major;
- reviews of the Victorian School of Languages and the Distance Education Centre were undertaken which led to improvements in delivery of programs.

In 1991 the Association of Independent Schools of Victoria (AISV) received $97,000 to support the teaching of languages other than English in Victorian non-government, non-Catholic schools. This funding was used to support the following activities:

- seminars on LOTE methodology;
- LOTE coordinators seminar;
- participation in activities conducted by other organisations;
- support for teachers to attend intensive language courses and to upgrade language or teaching methodology qualifications;
- provision of consultancy to schools as requested.

School-based projects included:

- review and planning of P–12 French program;
- teaching of LOTE by telematics;
- use of Target Language Only in French and German classes;
- LOTE Teleconferencing Network.

Materials developed included a Greek P–12 resource kit, a primary French program resource kit, a book of plays for students of Chinese and a report and catalogue of the AISV Australian Second Language Learning Program 1988–1991.

Science

The Science Framework P–10, which provides guidelines to schools for the development of curriculum and curriculum materials, recommends that all students study science and that science education should be concerned with environmental management and the survival and quality of life for all. Scientific knowledge, the solution of practical problems, the cultural and human context of science and opportunities for personal development are the four aspects of science that are being integrated into all courses of study.

Victoria has participated in the development of the national science statement and will develop the national science profile in 1992. Following the completion of the national statement and profile, course advice will be prepared to assist schools in the development of science curriculum that is consistent with the national statement. This will be particularly important in primary schools, where it is recognised that there is a need for science to be strengthened.

In 1991 the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) was commissioned by the Department of School Education to conduct a survey of science learning. The key aims of the study were to survey student performance with respect to the learning goals specified in the *Science Framework* to report on the full range of student performance; and to collect data that would allow comparisons with the Second International Science Study (SISS). The data were collected from samples of 1,442 year 5 and 1,223 year 9 students from schools, both government and non-government, across Victoria. This revealed no evidence of any decline in the levels of scientific knowledge and an analysis of students' attitudes to science identified a recognition of the usefulness of a better understanding of the environment.

The Hypatia's Place: Maths, Science and Technology Education Centre for Girls has been established to improve the educational outcomes of girls, as noted in the earlier section headed 'Education of Girls' on page 42.

Technology

The ministerial statement *Victoria, Education for Excellence* makes the following points in relation to technology:

- there is a necessity for widespread understanding of technological processes;
- technology is a necessary base for Australia's progress;
- Victoria has extensive facilities for teaching technology;
- school reorganisation will ensure that all schools will have up-to-date technology facilities to provide basic and advanced studies in technology for all students.

The DSE is coordinating the existing technology programs and resources in Victoria and developing plans for future directions.

A broadly representative Technology Studies Steering Committee, drawing on all three sectors of schooling, has been set up as a subcommittee of the State Board of Education to advise the Minister about the development of technology education in Victoria. Items the committee is intending to investigate include teacher training and expertise, teacher attitudes to the area, resourcing/staffing, student demand, promotion of the area, advice provision to teachers and differences throughout Australia.

Mathematics

The mathematics profiles have been a major focus throughout the year. The profiles provide the basis for reporting a student's strengths and weaknesses in mathematics. They provide a common language and framework for charting student progress and assist in the communication of detailed and accurate information between teachers, parents and schools. *The Mathematics Profiles Handbook* for the areas of space and number has been completed and disseminated to all schools.

Mathematics Course Advice P–6 and *Mathematics Course Advice 7–10* are two projects currently being undertaken to assist in the implementation of the aims and objectives contained in *A National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools*. The primary course advice has been trialled extensively in schools during late 1991. A draft copy of the *Mathematics Course Advice P–6* will be available to all schools in August 1992, with the secondary course advice (7–10) later in the year.

Two structured professional development programs in mathematics—*Exploring Mathematics in Classrooms (EMIC)* and *Continuing Mathematics*—were conducted for teachers throughout the State. A revision of the training manual for *Continuing Mathematics* has been completed.

A cluster of Catholic schools has negotiated with the mathematics department of the Australian Catholic University an ongoing professional development program suited to the needs of their teachers.

To further encourage parental participation in mathematics—developed initially through the Maths Matters strategy—the Maths Share project has been conceived and developed to facilitate parent participation in mathematical activities in the home environment using materials that are readily found in the home. Maths Share will be available to schools in July 1992.

Studies of society and environment

Development of the studies of society and environment curriculum area arising from the national statement and profile will provide support for schools through a clear definition of content and processes. Studies of society and environment are seen to be important for developing skills of critical evaluation and interpretation.

An analytical framework of the knowledge and skills which are distinctive to the area of studies of society has been completed. This will both assist the development of State course advice and give focus to the response to the national documents being developed as part of AEC collaborative curriculum projects. The report of the mapping process has been completed with the participation of staff on the national steering committee and reference group.

Involvement in additional projects supporting studies of society includes publication of an annotated register of visual resources for the learning area, and participation in the production of resources supporting citizenship education at the upper primary school level in conjunction with the Australian Electoral Commission.

The arts

Since the publication of *The Arts Framework P–10*, development within the area has been more clearly defined. Policy statements developed since then, *The Social Justice Framework* (1990) and *Victoria: Education for Excellence* (1991), further support the direction of the initial advice provided for the arts.

Development of the brief for the national curriculum statement and profiles nears completion with the formal consultative draft due to be presented to the steering

committee in May 1992. This will define the learning contexts and processes specific to the arts and enable a more consistent approach to curriculum development in the arts across the States and Territories. It will also address the role of the arts across the curriculum and within the wider community.

Resourcing remains an issue for the arts in several areas, including the provision of specialist teachers, for example instrumental and classroom music teachers; the provision of equipment, including electronic equipment, for arts technology programs; and the availability of suitable facilities, such as those required for the performing arts.

Currently 80 per cent of participants in the arts in the post-compulsory years of education are girls. Attention is to be given to devising programs that will make the arts more attractive and challenging for boys in order to increase their participation in and contribution to the arts in the wider community.

Additional State activities have been focused on establishing and promoting the identity of the arts, particularly in relation to the VCE. This has included the following exhibitions of student work:

- an Exhibition of VCE Art Folios, in conjunction with Eagle Insurance during State Education Week;
- the Annual Celebration of Young People and the Arts during October;
- the Common Threads Exhibition linking arts, technology and mathematics, in December 1991.

Thirty-one schools participated in the 1991 Artists in Schools Program (AIS), which covers the areas of the visual arts, crafts, design, the performing arts and literature. The AIS Program provides a rare opportunity for school students at all year levels to work with practising professional artists over an extended period of time.

Personal development

In 1991 the DSE developed and disseminated policy and guidelines on AIDS/HIV education in recognition of its responsibility for the education and protection of students. Professional development training was held for regional consultants who have then provided support for schools. Subsequently, all schools received curriculum support materials concerning AIDS/HIV. Additional support is provided by the secondment of two teachers to the Health Department Victoria's AIDS/STD Unit.

The Catholic sector developed and published a policy on AIDS/HIV and provided professional development for teachers in this area as well as materials to assist this and other areas of Christian education for personal development.

A pilot project focusing on school–community cooperation in drug education was completed in 1991. Further to this, a three-year project has been instigated by the DSE to develop a strategic plan for drug education. This project will evaluate and review drug education as part of a comprehensive health education policy and will develop professional training programs.

The Standing Strong project provided training for consultants and teachers on the implementation of a program concerned with the issues of sexual abuse and family violence. All post-primary schools received copies of the Standing Strong teachers' manual and student booklets.

Implementing the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)

The senior secondary years in Victoria are being transformed with the introduction of the VCE.

The VCE is a common two-year certificate covering a total of 44 studies (subjects) across years 11 and 12, which has the effect of combining these years as a single phase of schooling. Students may, however, elect to take the VCE over more than two years of study.

During 1991 all studies were implemented at the year 11 level while English, mathematics and Australian studies were also implemented at year 12.

Additional resourcing provided for the implementation of the VCE included:

- an increase of 25 per cent in the curriculum component of the Schools Grant (for government schools);
- an increase of 4 per cent in the Education Allowance for students in years 11 and 12 (for government and non-government schools);
- professional development for teachers with teachers being released for further VCE course development programs for up to two days each—16,920 teacher days were used for course development during 1991.

The VCE has been subject to continuing development and refinement. For example, Australian studies is not now to be required as a compulsory subject in year 11.

The VCE Administrative Software System (VASS), along with appropriate computer hardware, has been installed in all schools providing VCE programs, and was supported by extensive professional development in the use of the system. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board mainframe computer was enhanced to meet the increased data demands.

Student outcomes

The Victorian Profiles Program

The purpose of the Victorian Profiles Program (VPP), which began in 1991, is to report on the educational achievement of students in key areas of the curriculum in Victorian government schools using English and mathematics profiles and other subject profiles as they are developed. Catholic and independent schools participated in the program.

The use of profiles for recording and reporting student achievement stems from a commitment to assessment and reporting mechanisms that include a broader range of assessment information and offer a wider frame of reference for interpretation.

The Victorian Profiles Program is the basis for an assessment and reporting system that promotes student learning, provides soundly based information for reporting to parents, contributes to school planning and at the same time enables student achievement to be aggregated and reported regularly at the system level.

Findings from the Victorian Profiles Program also addressed equity issues and provided information on the progress in English and mathematics of seven sub-groups of students, namely girls, boys, rural, non-English speaking background, Koorie students, and students suffering the effects of poverty.

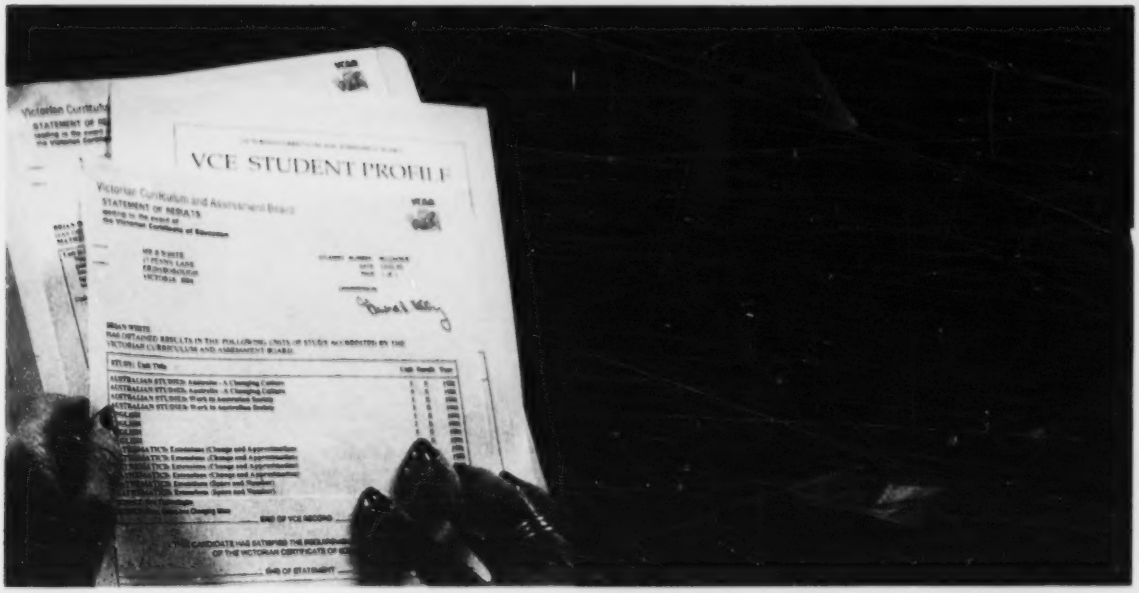
In 1991 a sample of 5,135 year 6 students from 134 Victorian government, Catholic and independent schools participated in the program. Professional development support, including a comprehensive professional development kit, was provided together with detailed recording instructions for the reading and writing bands of the English profiles.

Findings from the analysis of the school returns revealed that:

- 69 per cent of year 6 students in Victorian schools had developed, or were developing, up to (and including) the reading behaviours described in Band F of the English profiles;
- 72 per cent of year 6 students in Victorian schools had developed, or were developing, up to (and including) the writing behaviours described in Band F of the English profiles;
- the median achievement level for both reading and writing was at the top of Band E;
- girls tended to achieve at a higher level than boys in both reading and writing while rural students also tended to achieve at higher levels than non-rural students;
- while certain groups exhibited lower levels of achievement generally, the returns were marked by considerable variability.

A brief, descriptive State report was prepared and approved by the State Board of Education, which is the steering group for the Victorian Profiles Program, and copies were sent to all participating schools.

The Victorian Profiles Program is to be progressively expanded to cover reading, writing and spoken English in year 3 and year 6. Mathematics profiles, space and number, for samples of year 3 and year 6 students will also be included in 1992. The plan for 1993 will possibly entail the use of English and mathematics profiles to collect information at year 9 as well as at years 6 and 3.



Teaching and learning

Quality of teaching

Considerable progress had been made towards implementing improvements in the employment arrangements for teachers. Teaching Service registration, qualification, assessment, recruitment and appointment processes had been reviewed and options widely canvassed on future directions. Draft agreements on the required reforms were reached with the teacher unions and enabling legislation drafted. Merit protection principles have been developed for incorporation in all of these processes.

Additional resources were allocated across the professional development program and, for the first time, pupil-free days were targeted for high-priority activities and training. This program reflects increasing community and government recognition of the importance of professional development for teachers and other staff.

As part of the Award Restructure Agreement, selections were made of teachers for appointment to all Advanced Skills Teacher 1 (AST1) positions—more than 12,000 positions in all. The AST1 classification, which equates with the national benchmark, has been introduced as a means of promoting excellence in teaching. A review was undertaken to facilitate the continued implementation of award restructuring within the DSE and to comply with the requirements of structural efficiency set down by the Industrial Relations Commission of Victoria.

A full review of the AST1 classification was presented to the Industrial Relations Commission of Victoria, the outcomes of which would determine the future scope of AST 1, 2 and 3 classification appointments. These classifications will open avenues of promotion for skilled teachers within the school so that such teachers may be retained within a regular teaching role. Similar practices have resulted in parallel developments in non-government schools.

In line with a national trend towards greater provision of feedback and associated developmental support for principals, a proposal for a Principal Development Planning (Appraisal) process was developed in consultation with a working group, which included Principal Liaison Officers, and negotiations had commenced with relevant professional and community organisations.

Victoria, which is taking a leading role in the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning, has established a Quality of Teaching and Learning Coordination Committee to oversee the wide range of activities occurring within the DSE and its schools.

Statewide Principals Forum

The Statewide Principals Forum was established in 1990 to provide a framework for consultation with principals across the State. It is chaired by the Chief or Deputy Chief General Manager and consists of two principal liaison officers from each region—one primary and one secondary—together with a small number of principals nominated by the Chief General Manager for the purpose of maintaining a balance of representation. The forum is also attended by the Assistant Chief General Manager and the eight General Managers (Schools).

A major activity undertaken by the forum in 1991 was the development and distribution of an issues paper entitled *Leadership, Teaching and Devolution*. The responses to the issues paper were collated and a preliminary analysis made. The forum is to develop implementation plans in priority areas arising from the major findings of this exercise which will then be presented to the Chief General Manager for consideration.

Action Plan for Women

The goals of the Action Plan for Women in both the Teaching Service and Public Service include increasing the number of women in promotion positions and ensuring that industrial relations and personnel policy protect the rights and interests of women and that EEO objectives are adhered to.

A range of professional and career development programs has been conducted for specific target groups and information sessions on employment equity have been conducted in a wide range of workplaces.

Affirmative action initiatives in the new Teaching Service Award were implemented in the selection process for the appointment of teachers to the AST1 level. Within the administrative area of the DSE, the introduction of the Office Based Structure will facilitate greater workplace flexibility and multi-skilling to improve the career paths of officers in clerical positions, predominantly women.

In line with the priority tasks of the DSE for 1992, work has commenced on the preparation of a new Action Plan for Women for 1992–94.

Teaching contexts

Study of teacher education

A ministerial reference group was established to look at the implications for teacher practice arising from the implementation of the Victorian Certificate of Education and initiatives outlined in the ministerial statement *Victoria: Education for Excellence*. The group, which includes representatives from teacher, parent, industry, community groups and non-government schools, and the deans of education of institutions involved in teacher education, has been asked to report on a number of matters including existing pre-service courses, the supply and demand for teachers, and alternative models for teacher education and professional development.

Work-based child-care

The 1990 Award Restructure Agreement between the then Ministry of Education and Training and the teacher unions contains a commitment to establish a pilot project to provide work-based child-care.

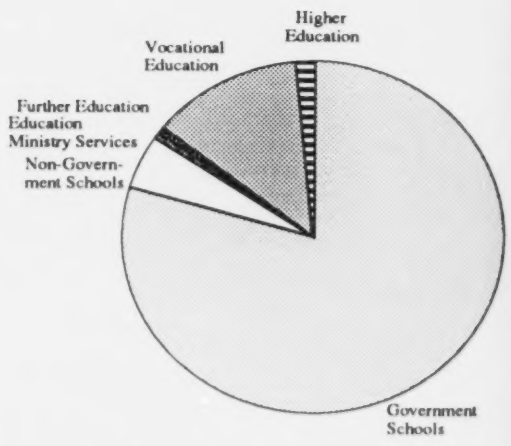
In 1991 the Minister approved a proposal to establish Victoria's first public sector work-based child-care centre for teachers as part of a major upgrade of an inner urban secondary college. The centre, which is a joint venture between the DSE and the Office of Pre-School and Child Care, will also provide child-care in the case of women who have left school early, had children and want to return to school. The centre is planned to open during 1992. A representative committee has been formed to develop child-care programs and establish management practices.

Developments associated with teaching

Enhancement of the personnel payroll system

The enhancement of the personnel/payroll system supports the the provisions of the Teacher Award Restructure and provides improved access by teachers to long service leave entitlements and service history. Agreement was

Figure 1. Relative proportions of recurrent expenditure within the Victorian education appropriation, 1991



Source: Victoria, Budget Paper 3, 1991

Table 3. School education expenditure and appropriations, 1990–91 and 1991–92 ($000)

	1990–91 Actual	*1991–92 Estimate*
Recurrent		
Salaries	835,606.2	1,870,888.3
Salary associated costs	193,558.3	208,729.4
Operating expenses	31,641.7	28,538.0
Other		
–Grants to schools	141,761.4	144,890.0
–Student transport/travel/concession	27,618.9	26,840.0
–Allowances (maintenance)	18,083.8	19,895.0
–Non-government school grants	136,102.3	(a)186,308.0
–Administrative rentals	14,047.4	14,553.0
–Other	17,861.3	20,216.0
Total recurrent	*2,416,281.3*	*2,520,857.7*
Works and services		
Reorganisation projects	7,417.0	13,524.0
Maintenance	49,428.0	51,999.5
School construction	65,840.0	79,198.0
School accommodation	28,457.0	22,114.0
Site purchases	21,300.0	12,600.0
Other	37,084.8	37,410.0
Total works and services	*209,526.8*	*216,845.5*
Total DSE appropriations	**2,625,808.2**	**2,737,703.2**

(a) The difference between 1990–91 and 1991–92 is due to the transfer of the first grant instalment for the calendar year from January to July.

Source: Budget Papers 3 and 5, 1991–92

reached with the relevant industrial bodies, and preliminary computer program changes undertaken, to enable the successful translation of Teaching Service personnel (not including ASTs or principals) to a new 12-point salary scale.

A further benefit of the system is that future award restructure changes can be delivered without delay and without the need for extensive clerical resources.

Computing in Schools Strategic Plan

The release of the Computing in Schools Strategic Plan aims to provide a systematic framework for the cost-effective use of computers for curriculum and administrative purposes. The draft strategic plan was circulated for comment to all representative school and teaching organisations. The strategic plan has led to a revision of the facilities standards for new schools.

Resourcing schools

Recurrent and capital expenditure

The 1991 calendar year falls across the 1990–91 and 1991–92 financial years, for which the actual and estimated expenditures are set out in Table 3. The table includes funds for government and non-government schools and sets out recurrent and works and services funding by the broad categories for which it is used.

Expenditure trends

Over the two financial years since 1989–90, there was a slight increase in actual recurrent and a slight decrease in actual works and services funding. These figures reflect the impact of a savings program in the area of school education. The program, which had a major impact on out-of-school expenditure and also produced some savings in schools, is expected to save in the order of $150 million over the 1990–91 and 1991–92 financial years.

Expenditure on schools constitutes around 85 per cent of all recurrent spending on education by the State of Victoria, a proportion which has remained relatively stable over the 1990–91 and 1991–92 financial years.

The bulk of recurrent expenditure on schools is for salaries. The number of full-time equivalent staff in schools in July 1991 was 39,447 teachers and 6,249 non-teachers, which was a reduction of 503 teachers and 35 non-teaching personnel on the previous year. In 1991 there were 1,657 persons in out-of-school positions, a reduction of 814 persons since 1989. This significant reduction in personnel was a direct consequence of the cost savings which the DSE was required to achieve as part of budgetary requirements.

Works and services expenditure for schools has amounted to approximately 75 per cent of the total capital appropriation in education. In 1991 the DSE opened four new primary schools, four new special developmental schools, one new secondary college and added major building stages at two recently opened secondary colleges. Major works under construction for completion in 1992 include nine new primary schools, three new special developmental schools, three new secondary colleges and a major building addition at a recently opened secondary college.

While parents make significant voluntary contributions to the non-salary operating expenses of government schools, there are few sources of funding other than State appropriations. Interest is developing in sponsorship agreements with commercial enterprises and the offering of places to overseas full-fee paying students is still under consider-ation. Non-government schools receive funding from the State and Commonwealth governments and charge tuition fees. Non-government schools are also investigating sponsorship arrangements and some have been active in enrolling overseas students.

Other State initiatives

State-wide computerised systems

Decision Support System

The key aims of the Decision Support System (DSS) include improving the strategic decision-making capabilities of senior managers, providing a structure for monitoring the outcomes of policy initiatives to improve the quality of education, and developing a framework for the collection of information that meets the accountability requirements of the DSE. The initial system was upgraded and released in the latter part of the year and is being trialled across a wide area network to allow for system access from regional offices. The key benefits so far are reflected in the increased number of users accessing the system.

Electronic mail services and LAN system

Electronic mail services link all secondary colleges and the administrative offices of the DSE and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board (VCAB). The service enhances the dissemination of information between the administrative area and schools, the sharing of information between schools and the reporting of VCE information. The LAN (Novell Local Area Networks) system, which also incorporates electronic mail services, now provides for improved communication links between the central administration and the eight regional offices. A further benefit of the system is that the regions can now directly access centrally maintained databases.

Integrated office system

The DSE is trialling an integrated office system within the central administration area and one regional office. The trial is also evaluating the benefits of a uniform word-processing environment and the feasibility of a wider area network linking selected schools for the benefit of electronic curriculum delivery. Already it is apparent that an integrated office system linking the central administration,

regional offices and schools has the potential to achieve annual cost savings of $1.5 million along with productivity gains of $2.1 million.

Schools Assets Management System

The Schools Assets Management System (SAMS) has been designed to provide a comprehensive database on the distribution and use of schools' assets. The availability of this information will enhance the targeting of resources and planning for future requirements.

The computer systems containing the SAMS applications have been distributed to each education region. The loading of data received from schools for the Furniture, Equipment and Motor Vehicles Module is close to finalisation, which will assist schools and regions in reviewing insurance claims.

Computerised drawings have been produced for each school in the State, indicating site and building information, including details of room layout within the building. The drawings are being validated and distributed to regions to assist with the calculation of cleaning grant entitlements. To date, the use of the SAMS system has resulted in a 5 per cent savings in cleaning costs.

Technology studies facilities

The introduction of technology studies was a major curriculum initiative in Victorian schools and is now part of Frameworks and the VCE. A set of facilities standards for the resourcing of technology studies in secondary colleges was approved by the Standards Committee in February 1991 and the provision of technology facilities has become one of the key components of new schools, major school upgrades and school reorganisation. A three-year program of works which commenced in 1990, involving an expenditure of nearly $17 million, has benefited 20 secondary colleges. A further eight projects are at planning stage and the number of projects could increase as a direct result of school reorganisation projects. Non-government schools are also aware of the need to develop and upgrade facilities in the area of technology education.

Energy management in schools

The efficient use of energy in schools has been an ongoing program within the DSE, supported by energy audit guidelines, publications and in-service activities. Recently, the State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SEC) in cooperation with the DSE, the Department of Manufacturing and Industry Development, Energy Victoria and the Office of the Environment conducted energy audits at a number of schools throughout the State.

An energy audit kit, which provides schools with a strategy to conduct their own basic energy audits, is now being developed for trial in a number of schools. If the trial is successful, video material will be produced to support the program.

Minor and urgent works

The devolution to schools of responsibility for minor maintenance and urgent works is being trialled in one region. Schools can identify their own priorities and will be directly responsible for planning and implementing such works in accordance with guidelines and with audit and accountability procedures. The funding to schools for this purpose has been added to the Schools Grant.

Priorities for 1992

In 1991 the Minister announced new organisational arrangements within the ministry which resulted in the the formation of the DSE. As part of the new organisational arrangements, the Minister released the DSE strategic plan, *Planning for Successful Schooling, 1992–1994*. The plan identifies five key objectives for school education. The definition of key performance indicators for each objective provides an accountability measure for the implementation of the strategies that are associated with the objective.

The priority tasks for 1992 which support the longer term objectives are:

- district provision and school reorganisation;
- further action in conducting curriculum audits and school reorganisation; enhancing education provision among clusters of isolated country schools using telematics; developing, accrediting and promoting vocational programs linking VCE and training programs; and introducing a second language as a core study in secondary schools and encouraging LOTE study in primary schools;
- devolution and accountability;
- improving all facets of reporting by schools; implementing English profiles at year 6 in a sample of schools; contributing to national curriculum developments; and further enhancing school decision-making powers in relation to physical and human resources;
- improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- participating in the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning; promoting excellence across the range of student outcomes; implementing new career structures for the Teaching Service; and developing a further Action Plan for Women;
- implementation of comprehensive post-compulsory curriculum provision;
- assisting the implementation of the VCE with further support material; establishing curriculum pathways that link the VCE to further study and employment along with TAFE credit transfers; assisting the implementation of the VCE administrative software system; assisting VCAB to implement VCE verification procedures; and beginning to connect key subject profiles with employment-related key competencies as outlined in the Finn Report and in support of the Mayer Committee.

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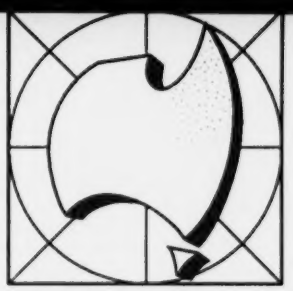


Priority objectives for 1991

Government schools

During 1991 the statement of purpose of the Queensland Department of Education was expressed in its *Development Plan 1991–95*:

We in the Department of Education work in partnership with parents and the wider community to ensure that students in Queensland receive a high-quality education appropriate to their needs.

> We aim to help students develop as independent and knowledgeable people who are morally and socially responsible, employable, and capable of self-fulfilment and of contributing to society.

In achieving its statement of purpose, the *Development Plan* endorsed the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia, and indicated specific areas in which the department strove to develop students, namely:

- the skills of English literacy, including skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing;
- skills in numeracy and other mathematical skills;
- skills in analysis and problem solving;
- skills of information processing and computing;
- an understanding of the role of science and technology in society, together with scientific and technological skills;
- a knowledge and appreciation of Australia's historical and geographical context;
- a knowledge of languages other than English;
- a knowledge and appreciation of, and confidence to participate in, the creative arts;
- an understanding of, and concern for, balanced development and the global environment;
- a capacity to exercise judgement in matters of morality, ethics and social justice.

The *Development Plan* also stated that, while maintaining standards in all the above areas, the focus for development and improvement during the next five years would be:

- students' achievements in literacy and numeracy;
- skills in languages other than English and sensitivity to other cultures, including those of Asia, Europe and Aboriginal and Islander communities;
- students' skills in using computer technology in a wide range of activities;
- students' knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable active and informed citizenship;
- an increase in the levels of participation and achievement of the least advantaged student groups.

Non-government schools

Catholic education

During 1991 Catholic schools in Queensland addressed most of the goals enunciated in the national goals. Major emphasis, however, was on the following five objectives and related strategies:

- to maximise the competency, efficiency and confidence of teachers. Strategies included the provision of a comprehensive series of in-service education programs associated with the new P–10 English language arts syllabus; the provision, in the distance mode, of a diploma course in Christian leadership; and the provision of numerous school-based programs which addressed locally identified needs.
- to provide processes and procedures by which the school community and others look closely at the school's purposes and performances. The major strategy was the continued operation of the Catholic School Renewal Program, which involves the whole school community in reviewing their educative efforts, and in planning a series of school development initiatives for improvement.

- to integrate aspects of culture and faith and to contribute to Australian and world society. Strategies included the development of programs in Aboriginal and Islander Cultural Studies; and the development of additional programs in languages other than English (LOTE), particularly in the study of the Japanese language.
- to give priority to matters of social justice and equity. Strategies included the implementation of structural and procedural reforms in schools to improve access and participation for groups and individuals regarded as disadvantaged in the schooling process; and a focus on aspects of child protection as part of the general emphasis on the dignity of the person and the entitlement of human rights.
- to make school more relevant to contemporary and international experiences. Strategies included increasing involvement in TAFE–secondary link courses; sharpening the focus on aspects of Asian Studies; and expanding involvement in certain areas of technology education.

Independent schools

An analysis of data received from individual schools indicated that the following goals and strategies were emphasised during 1991:

- the provision of an excellent education for all young people through maximising the competence, confidence and efficiency of teachers (a goal emphasised by three-quarters of the schools). Strategies indicated by schools included: providing of professional development; providing school-based in-service training as well as appropriate induction courses for new teachers; improving management communication; encouraging membership of professional associations; and extending school-based professional libraries.
- development of English literacy and numeracy skills. Strategies nominated by schools included: monitoring and assessing students regularly; using better screening procedures; using innovative pedagogy; enlisting voluntary classroom help; evaluating reading materials and increasing library acquisitions; publishing a student magazine; encouraging staff to attend the Further Literacy Inservice Program (FLIP); and improving course development.
- increasing fluency and competency in languages other than English. Strategies included: introducing additional languages; purchasing additional reading materials; expanding of language laboratory resources; and funding study leave for staff to increase skills related to foreign languages and culture.
- increasing skills in information processing and computing. Examples of strategies included: the purchase of computers and software; and the training of teachers and parent aides in the use of computer programs with children.
- providing feedback to the school community and involving the community in school operations. Strategies included: encouragement of parental participation in policy making, course development and reporting procedures; organising regular meetings of parents and school staff; and holding open days.
- in five special schools, including three Aboriginal community schools, the addition of specific reference to the following goals—provision of equality of opportunities; appropriate career education and knowledge of the world of work; development of self-confidence, self-esteem and personal excellence; and facilitating transition from secondary to tertiary education.
- in the Queensland Seventh-Day Adventist system, the adoption of the following three priorities: provision of an excellent education for all young people; involvement of parents in the school program; and involvement of the community in the support of each school.

Excellence and equity in schooling

Details of the number of schools in Queensland are provided in Table 1.

Retention rates

Overall, apparent retention rates from year 8 to year 11 and year 12 for all Queensland schools continued to rise in 1991 to 89.5 per cent and 79.6 per cent respectively. This is compared to the overall year 11 and year 12 retention rates for 1990 of 83.8 per cent and 74 per cent respectively.

Year 12 retention rate differences among various segments of the Queensland student population are exemplified in Figures 1 and 2.

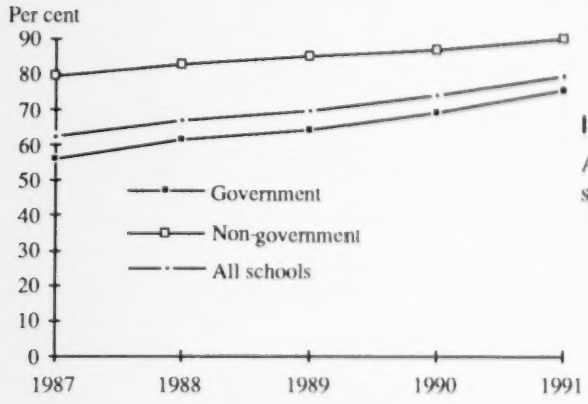
Table 1. Schools by sector, level and location, Queensland, 1991

	Urban	*Rural*	*Total*
Government			
Primary	400	605	1,005
Secondary	111	60	171
Combined	2	64	66
Special schools	62	4	66
Total	**575**	**733**	**1,308**
Non-government			
Primary	167	71	238
Secondary	68	14	82
Combined	59	15	74
Special schools	4	0	4
Total	**298**	**100**	**398**
All schools			
Primary	567	676	1,243
Secondary	179	74	253
Combined	61	79	140
Special schools	66	4	70
Total	**873**	**833**	**1,706**

Note: excludes eight Centres for Continuing Secondary Education (CCSE). In this chapter, the terms 'urban' and 'rural' are based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics definitions, with the exception that 'urban' refers to urban centres of 10,001, and above and 'rural' has an upper threshold of 10,000 persons.

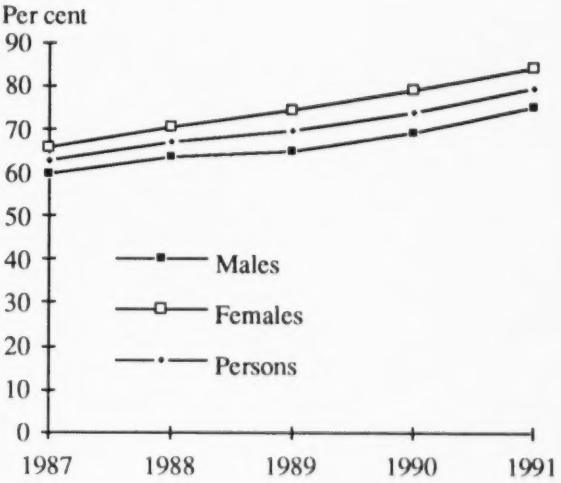
Source: Queensland Department of Education

Figure 1. Apparent retention rates to year 12, by sector, Queensland, 1987–91



Source: Queensland Department of Education

Figure 2. Apparent retention rates to year 12, by gender, Queensland, 1987–91



Source: Queensland Department of Education

Issues associated with effective schooling

Government schools

During 1991 implementation of recommendations contained in the department's seminal document *Focus on Schools* continued to be implemented. Aspects associated with improving the quality of schooling included:

- increased school responsibility;
- enhanced accountability;
- increased involvement of a wider school community;
- improved levels of support provided to schools.

Increased school responsibility

Activities associated with giving schools increased responsibility included the following:

- Plans were developed which will eventually result in individual schools being given responsibility for the approval of excursions, budgeting for professional development, and for a range of minor maintenance activities.
- Discussions were begun and are continuing into increasing responsibility for student suspension and exclusion, staffing requirements and minor building maintenance finance.

- The administrative and industrial implications of the proposed devolution of some of the responsibilities were examined carefully, particularly those that related to the responsibility of teachers for non-professional activities such as playground and bus duty, and some clerical and administrative tasks.

Enhanced accountability

In the latter part of 1991, central and regional office personnel were appointed in the review and evaluation area for the purpose of undertaking educational reviews; monitoring standards; conducting financial, compliance and operational audits; and providing advice on improved strategies for, among other things, policy development.

Major review and evaluation at school level during 1991 was associated with investigations and the conduct of collaborative school reviews (CSR). Statewide data collected on the latter activity was reported in the publication *Review of Collaborative School Review Reports*, which indicated that up to 30 September 1992:

- a CSR had been conducted in 6 per cent of government schools since the commencement of the process in September 1990;
- the most frequently mentioned curriculum areas on which CSRs made recommendations for future action were: English language arts (63 per cent of CSRs), mathematics (49 per cent) and human relations (48 per cent); while the least mentioned were languages other than English (11 per cent) and science (14 per cent).
- the most frequently mentioned non-curriculum areas covered in CSR recommendations were: aspects of teaching and learning and classroom management (73 per cent of CSRs), and school organisation and administration/management (72 per cent); while the least frequently mentioned were public relations (27 per cent) and school climate (19 per cent).

Wider school community participation

Another of the major changes to the operation of schools related to the increased involvement of a wider school community in the management of the school. To achieve this, the School Advisory Council's Reference Committee was established in April 1991 for the purpose of conducting a trial in up to 45 selected schools. Due to legal questions requiring resolution, the trial was postponed. However, planning continued for the production of an information booklet and videotape, for use by schools considering nominating for the trial.

Improved levels of support for schools

In increasing the effectiveness of schools, attention was paid to improving the support provided to schools. Activities included the following:

- Forty-five school support centres, designed to respond to the needs of their local school communities, were established. Although only in their infancy, by the end of 1991, most school support centres had already begun to facilitate schools' access to and utilisation of networks.
- Action was taken to locate professional support staff, including educational advisers, in either schools or school support centres rather than in regional or central office. The aim was to place departmental resources and services as close as possible to the client group—schools.
- The Open Access Support Centre, with responsibilities to promote those strategies and practices which allow all students to gain access to the curriculum options and programs that best suit their needs, was established and a coordinator appointed. Major areas of operations which were consolidated during the latter part of 1991 were: distance education, program development, publishing services, and materials and resource production.
- An Advocacy and Liaison Office was planned within central office. Strategies were developed to consult with stakeholders and other interested community groups during the year on this issue. The aim of this office was to enable parent groups, including parents of students with special needs, to represent their views to the department.

Non-government schools

Almost all Catholic schools in Queensland have in their prospectus, statements which indicate each school's commitment to strive for excellence. Within the Catholic school systems of Queensland, this commitment to excellence was supported and exhibited in the following ways during 1991:

- Curriculum committees at diocesan and State levels monitored developments and initiatives which stemmed from sources at Commonwealth, State, system and local levels. These committees ensured that schools were kept apprised of developments and were supported in their efforts to effect improvements.
- Conferences designed to promote effective instructional and organisational leadership were held regularly for key personnel.
- School Renewal programs of evaluation and implementation were an on going feature of the work of most schools. The action plans of schools in 1991 indicated that schools addressed improvements in at least the following areas: student assessment and

reporting; increased community participation, curriculum diversification, improved skill development in students; access to technology, and enhanced in-service education for teachers in subject areas, e.g. English language arts.

- In almost 50 per cent of Catholic schools, school boards were either established, or in the process of being established. School boards improved access to, and participation in, policy making by parents and others in the school community.

Within independent schools, school-based curriculum committees were supported by the Education Committee of the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland, and by subcommittees and working parties of this elected standing committee. This support included:

- information dissemination;
- access to a range of resources;
- formulation of responses to State and Federal Government initiatives;
- conferences, seminars and workshops directly related to curriculum issues.

Social justice

Activities associated with improving social justice among the student populations covered the education of:

- girls;
- students with disability;
- students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds;
- students from other cultures;
- students at a distance or in rural communities;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders;
- students at risk;
- gifted and talented students;

Education of girls

Details on the numbers of students in Queensland, by gender and sector, are provided in Table 2.

Following the establishment of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Gender Equity in 1990, a full-time executive officer was appointed in April 1991. Activities of the committee during 1991 included:

- recommendations to the Minister concerning the inclusion of a gender equity statement in Board of Senior Secondary School Studies syllabuses on school sport; participation by gender in school sport; and teenage pregnancy and its implications for education;
- submissions to relevant bodies on: the national statements on English and on science; the review of permanent exemptions to the Sex Discrimination Act 1984; the proposed anti-discrimination legislation in Queensland; and the Queensland Curriculum Management Review;
- planning for a State conference for parents and educators;
- planning for the preparation of a booklet of strategies and indicators for the achievement of gender equity in Queensland schools.

Government schools

Within the government sector, the Gender Equity Unit of the Studies Directorate coordinated policy development, provided professional development and support for central and regional personnel, and provided resource development support. Activities occurring during the year included:

- the preparation of another *Razz* magazine (a gender inclusive magazine for year 8s) and the accompanying *Springboard Ideas for Teachers*;
- a Theatre-in-Education project, undertaken jointly by the Department and the Queensland University of Technology, which developed a script and performance focusing on gender issues;
- projects of State and regional significance to address gender issues in relation to curriculum and supportive school environments. Outcomes planned or completed included: reports in relation to girls and technology and girls and physical activity; workbooks and curriculum materials relating to P–7 World of Work and maths/science; and a handbook for administrators/schools on supportive school environment issues.

Table 2. Number of students by gender and sector, Queensland, 1991

	Government	*Non-government*	*All schools*
Males	203,203	68,135	271,338
Females	194,822	64,656	259,478
Persons	**398,025**	**132,791**	**530,816**

Note: full-time enrolments only; excludes preschool enrolments; includes enrolments at centres for continuing secondary education and schools of distance education

Source: Queensland Department of Education

- a gender equity Statewide conference which provided a forum for teachers, community members, teacher educators and others to present work regarding gender equity in which they had been involved; and professional development to all groups involved in gender equity education issues. The conference was attended by 230 educators.

Non-government schools

Within Catholic education, the gradual implementation of a gender equity policy, the use of *Guidelines on Inclusive Language* and a more sensitive approach to staffing and promotional procedures, have partially redressed existing practices related to women and girls in Catholic education.

Staff in-servicing and school-based initiatives by independent schools ensured that gender equity and opportunities were maintained.

Student disability

The provision of quality educational services to students continued to be an important feature of schooling provision in Queensland.

A comprehensive program of research, consultation and publication was undertaken by the Ministerial Advisory Council for Special Educational Needs. Publications included: *Enabling Integration: Supporting Students, Supporting Schools; Expectations of Schools: Changing Schooling for Low Achievers; Education Needs and Provisions for Students with Adjustment Difficulties;* and *Living and Learning.*

Government schools

Details on the estimated number of students with disabilities in Queensland government schools, by gender and school type are provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Estimated number of students with disabilities by gender and school type, government schools, Queensland, 1991

	Males	*Females*	*Persons*
Special school	2,038	1,405	3,443
Special class	1,357	870	2,227
Regular class(a)	19,981	19,255	39,236
Total	**23,376**	**21,530**	**44,906**

(a) Estimated at 1 per cent of enrolments in regular classes

Source: Queensland Department of Education

In the government sector, highlights in the first part of 1991 included:

- continued support to high quality professional development activities in specific disability areas for a range of professionals including teachers, therapists, administrators and nurses;
- continued support to literacy and numeracy through such projects as signed English readers, a mathematics guide and curriculum for blind students, and literacy modules for students with learning disabilities;
- the finalisation of reviews concerned with educational provision for students with motor disorders and hearing impairment, and with early special education.

Later in 1991, as part of an organisational restructure, a number of positions were created at the central office, regional office, school support centre and school levels to share responsibility for students with special needs. Specific initiatives included:

- a movement towards a coordinated, integrated notion of schooling which incorporates a flexible, inclusive curriculum, and which provides unified support services of benefit to all students;
- establishment of a Statewide working party to formulate a management plan for the policy of integration. The brief included the identification of the key issues in implementing an integration policy, and the development of strategies to address these at all levels;
- establishment of a Statewide Low Incidence Support Centre for students with low-incidence educational needs which cannot be satisfied through the resource capacity of schools, school support centres and regions.

Non-government schools

In the Catholic sector, the inclusion of students with physical impairments or disabilities in mainstream classrooms was expanded.

Independent schools continued their integration policy and the increase in enrolment of students with physical and mental disabilities and impairments was noticeable.

Socioeconomic disadvantage

The Commonwealth's Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) continued to be the predominant avenue for improving educational access and outcomes for students in communities with the greatest degree of socioeconomic disadvantage.

Government schools

In the Queensland government sector, the Disadvantaged Schools Program is called the Special Programs Schools

Scheme (SPSS). Statewide SPSS initiatives designed to support disavantaged students included:

- ongoing support for regionalisation of the scheme;
- development of support material to increase participation of parents and the wider community;
- implementation of the nationally developed Ross methodology as a process for client identification;
- extensive consultation with members of school communities;
- exploration of emergent needs of students in low socioeconomic circumstances.

Specific programs supported included:

- school-based curriculum programs to broaden curriculum to cater more comprehensively for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds;
- programs to develop economic, political, organisational and technological knowledge necessary for students to function effectively in society;
- effective parent and community participation programs to enhance learning of students;
- literacy and numeracy programs;
- professional development and in-service programs for teachers and parents;
- development of a Statewide newsletter for sharing of approaches to the issue of low socioeconomic status;
- research into the effectiveness of home–school community workers.

Non-government schools

The major focus of the non-government sector Disadvantaged Schools Program was the initiation of research efforts (statistical and sociological) to gain clearer perspectives on the nature and evidence of 'disadvantage' in non-government school communities. This work will continue over 2–3 years and will include the ABS Census data as it becomes available in 1992. This focus was matched by the theme of the 1991 conference (State level)—the concept of disadvantage in the context of whole school curriculum change.

Specific projects supported included:

- a parent-initiated study into parent involvement in curriculum change;
- the implementation of multi-age organisational arrangements in a rural school with a 'high top';
- a school community using an 'agricultural plot' as a learning site;
- the provision of access for students to a variety of cultural experiences.

Cultural equity

Government schools

Immigrant education programs offered high-quality language support and information services aimed at enhancing equity and access especially for newly arrived immigrants. The basic premise of immigrant education programs is the belief that language is more readily learnt through reference to the mainstream context in which a learner operates.

During 1991 there were 1,529 new arrivals in the schools ESL program in Queensland. Of these, 1,260 were enrolled in the metropolitan area and 269 were in country areas.

During 1991 ESL activities included:

- bilingual programs for lower primary students at two schools with a high Vietnamese population;
- establishment of intensive language centres for children in years 6 and 7 at three locations in the metropolitan area;
- the operation of the Milpera School for the initial assessment, placement and referral of newly arrived non-English speaking students desiring to continue their secondary school education;
- the provision of cluster programs in nine secondary schools;
- the continuation of visiting and school-based ESL services in primary and secondary schools;
- maintenance of curriculum support centres through the Immigrant Education Support Centre, including the development and dissemination of teaching materials associated with English Language Development Across the Curriculum (ELDAC) and Language in Learning (LIL) projects. Non-government schools also took advantage of these materials, recognising their excellence. Tutor training programs were conducted for both of these projects;
- further development of the Curriculum Centred Language Assessment Project (CCLA), which is exploring a more equitable basis for the assessment of bilingual learners. In 1991 classroom-based action research projects in the adult and secondary areas were completed and their documentation begun; and the primary project Initial Assessment Profile was initiated and developed;
- continuation of staff development programs of a high standard, including a series of workshops on systemic functional linguistics and the ongoing course offered through the Diploma in the Teaching of English Across the Curriculum in Multilingual Schools;

- consultation and discussion in preparation for the regionalisation of immigrant education to be phased in during 1992.

Non-government schools

Within Catholic education, there was an increased use of bilingual assistants in some schools. Multicultural home–school liaison officers also did much to offset language and cultural differences which work against access to schooling.

Distance and rural education

The number of P–12 students isolated from mainstream schooling and requiring education in a distance mode increased to over 7,000 students. These students included those:

- who were geographically isolated;
- whose families were itinerant;
- who were overseas with their families;
- who attended rural high schools and required additional subjects;
- who were enrolled in post-compulsory courses;
- whose parents chose a home-based learning situation.

Ongoing distance education priorities were to:

- provide curriculum options for students unable to access mainstream education;
- enhance the range of programs that best suit the needs of these students;
- make optimum use of resources, utilising technology where possible, to sustain and enhance teacher and learner interaction;
- develop materials determined by and responsive to the educational needs of students and their communities.

Specific distance education initiatives in 1991 included:

- new facilities for the Cairns School of Distance Education, which enabled the year levels offered to be extended from years 1 and 2 to years 1 to 7;
- relocation of the Mt Isa School of Distance Education;
- new facilities for the Charleville School of Distance Education, which had been previously destroyed by floods;
- planning for new distance education delivery points in the Capricornia region;
- establishment of an Open Access Support Centre, which subsumed the Support Unit of the School of Distance Education and broadened its concept of access to educational options;
- trialling and evaluation of new primary cross-curriculum programs, and continuation of program development for P–12 courses in line with departmental curriculum documents;
- allocation of $1 million for the purchase of resources to support new primary curriculum material and development of LOTE materials for use in the distance education mode and in mainstream classes;
- liaison with the department's Aboriginal and Islander Education Branch and on a national level to address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students in remote areas;
- the use of technology in Catholic schools to assist in the teaching of LOTE and music.

Within the non-government sector, both Catholic and independent schools continued to provide an alternative to distance education through 53 boarding schools throughout Queensland, enrolling over 9,111 students. There remains a strong commitment by boarding schools to the provision of education for disadvantaged remote and rural students in Queensland.

With respect to rural education, the Commonwealth-funded Country Areas Program (called Priority Country Areas Program in Queensland—PCAP) continued to support innovative projects in government and non-government schools which assisted in alleviating the effects of geographical isolation. The program reached 5.4 per cent of primary and secondary students and their communities across 90 per cent of the State's geographical area.

The following types of activities undertaken during 1991 included:

- the provision of social, cultural and educational experiences for students, including expressive arts projects, creative writing camps; physical education and tennis camps; children's writing projects; choir and orchestra tours; activity days; drama and music enrichment; instrumental music; enrichment camps;
- the provision of consultancy and resource support services, including development of art boxes for remote schools; electronic network links for Island schools; consultancy services; home–school liaison; telelearning projects; home tutor in-service; and Islander adult literacy projects.

Details on the number of Queensland students by locality and sector are provided in Table 4. As can be seen, about 20 per cent were located in rural areas, based on the definition of rurality indicated in the footnote to Table 1.

Table 4. Students by locality and sector, Queensland, 1991

	Government	*Non-government*	*All schools*
Urban	304,970	117,714	422,684
Rural	93,055	15,077	108,132
Total	**398,025**	**132,791**	**530,816**

Note: full-time enrolments only; excludes preschool enrolments; includes enrolments at Centres for Continuing Secondary Education and Schools of Distance Education

Source: Queensland Department of Education

Aboriginal and Islander education

Government schools

Details on the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) students in Queensland Government schools, by gender and level, are provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) students in government schools, by gender and level, Queensland, 1991

	Males	*Females*	*Persons*
Primary	6,418	5,985	12,403
Secondary	2,984	2,959	5,943
Special schools	97	51	148
Total	**9,499**	**8,995**	**18,494**

Source: Queensland Department of Education

During 1991 an independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Audit and Evaluation Project was established by the Minister to answer the question 'Are the present education services provided by the Queensland Department of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as effective, efficient and relevant to these groups needs, as current funding levels allow?'. Pertinent statistical information was provided by the department to the project team in the report *Student Absence and Mobility Rates* and *Staffing Patterns in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Government Community schools in Queensland*. This included the findings that:

- while there was a wide degree of variation in absence rates among the 31 community schools, overall absence rates over the survey period (term 2 1991) were high;
- overall mobility rates (for both admissions and leavers) were low. Mobility rates varied between community schools, but for many schools, no movements for students were recorded at all during the survey period;
- the vast majority of higher level school positions were occupied by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and the majority of lower level school positions were occupied by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

A confidential report of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Audit and Evaluation Project was due to be presented to the Minister for Education early in 1992.

Priority was given in1991 to professional development of teaching and non-teaching personnel with regard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, cultures, lifestyles and appropriate classroom strategies. This priority was in recognition of the retention rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students being approximately 60 per cent of that for all students.

Other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander projects included:

- completion of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood education policy;
- development of a preschool package, including a video, posters and brochures, to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents to enrol their children at State preschool centres;
- expansion of the Remote Area Teacher Education Program, previously operating at Yorke and Badu Islands, to the Aboriginal communities of Hopevale and Aurukun. The program will train Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to teach within their own and neighbouring communities;
- continued expansion of the Aboriginal and Islander Tertiary Aspirations Program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in secondary schools;
- strengthening of the networking of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers and the links with other providers such as Catholic education, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander independent schools, TAFE (particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs), and tertiary institutions;
- increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parent participation in schools and regional reference and advisory groups.

Non-government schools

Within Catholic education, 1991 saw special attention being given to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their communities. Highlights included:

- surveys of needs which led to the production of particular resources dealing with cultural studies, e.g. the production of the curriculum materials Harmony in Between by the Rockhampton diocese;
- the expanded use of the Aboriginal and Islander Cultural Studies Centre by the Brisbane diocese, which indicates a high success rate for its programs available to students in Catholic, government and other systems alike;
- the establishment of a Transition Centre at St Augustine's Boarding School in Cairns, which has been particularly successful in meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Islander students entering secondary education and in the boarding environment;
- the widespread use of home–school liaison officers, which has promoted greater retention among Aboriginal and Islander students.

Independent schools with Aboriginal and Islander students have made a determined effort to meet cultural and community needs through non-graded special programs.

Students at risk

A range of regionally coordinated and school-based programs provided for those special needs government school students who were identified as being at risk. During 1991 initiatives included:

- special learning needs programs such as Alternative Learning for Adolescents (ALFA) and Learning Adapted to Specific Educational Requirements (LASER). Such programs aimed to promote more equitable educational outcomes for these students;
- home–school liaison programs aimed to increase the retention of those students who leave school early;
- the employment of approximately 40 Aboriginal and Islander counsellors, who liaised between students, parents and schools to help achieve equitable educational outcomes;
- the employment of approximately 15 advisory visiting teachers, who supported schools and families in behaviour management strategies for students;
- a joint Uniting Church–Department program which supported students experiencing difficulties in the school setting.

The major Statewide initiative in this area was the Commonwealth-funded Students at Risk Program (STAR). During 1991, 36 Queensland government schools were targeted to receive funds from this program for the purpose of improving participation in education for especially disadvantaged young people. Typical initiatives included:

- in-service programs for teachers;
- programs to enhance home–school relationships;
- surveys and tracking of 'at risk' students;
- community-based enterprises;
- alternative learning programs;
- motivational workshops;
- strengthened student welfare;
- building self-esteem programs.

Gifted and talented students

Throughout 1991 a full-time State coordinator and a number of regional consultants focused on gifted and talented government school students. Their work was supported by a departmental advisory committee.

Activities of the coordinator at central office included the organising of conferences, information sharing and Statewide and interstate networking, recording of initiatives through surveys, resource collation, and policy development and strategic planning.

Regional consultants were responsible for assistance to schools for students and teachers. They provided resources, conducted in-service programs, and established regional committees and inter-school networks to implement established policy. They also organised out-of-school-hours mentor programs and specialist camps for bright children.

The activities of the departmental advisory committee, which included community and parent representatives, included the following:

- the conduct of a research project which examined the issue of identification of underachieving gifted children;
- the conduct of the regional, State and national competitions of the widely acclaimed Tournament of Minds, with the assistance of Department of Education officers.

Independent schools ensured student participation in State and national competitions, and their commitment to the provision of specialist education to meet individual needs is evidenced in the employment of targeted teachers and staff in-service programs.

General and vocational education

Finn Report

After the release in July 1991 of the Finn Report, *Young People's Participation in Post-Compulsory Education and Training*, the Queensland Department of Education undertook an intensive period of consultation both within the department, with the TAFE sector, with other

stakeholders, including non-government schools and tertiary educators, which led to the development of a Queensland State Government response.

In broad terms the thrust of the report was supported, as were many of the recommendations relating to the proposed convergence of general and vocational education. Conditional support was given to the key areas of competence. Caution was expressed about possible negative effects of the key areas of competence, including narrowing effects on the curriculum, compatibilities with the AEC subject profiles, and potential 'barring' effects on entry to post-compulsory education and training. The department supported the notion that the key areas of competence should be further developed by the Mayer Committee.

The Queensland Government response drew attention to the need for more focus on social justice issues, including gender equity.

Whereas the Finn Report, in discussing delivery arrangements, seemed to favour the 'senior college' model, the response requested that the notion of 'provision of an environment and framework for treating students in years 11 and 12 as young adults' be substituted.

Both government and non-government educational authorities have subsequently taken part in the deliberations of the Mayer Committee.

Post-compulsory (young adult) education

Government schools

During 1991, $5 million was distributed to schools, regions and central office on an 85 per cent, 10 per cent and 5 per cent basis for expenditure according to the *Senior Schooling Support Program Funding Guidelines* (1990). Funding supported specific developments in broadening the curriculum, work education, and in implementing corporate goals, from *The Corporate Vision for Senior Schooling: A Policy Document* (Department of Education, 1989) and the draft *Senior Schooling Curriculum Framework*. The focus of expenditure was on learners and the curriculum, teachers and teaching, leaders and leadership.

In April 1991 a package of draft policy materials was distributed to schools and other interested parties. These materials included the draft *Focus on the Learner: Senior Schooling Curriculum Framework; Focus on the Learner: Sample Case Studies;* and *Focus on the Learner: The Video*.

Subsequent to the distribution of this package of draft policy materials, there was continued support for and collaboration with schools to initiate and continue professional development activities and curriculum analysis. These activities incorporated the key principles of foundations education, inclusivity and essential learnings. Collaboration with schools and regions continues to contribute to the policy development process.

During 1991 detailed results of a departmental research study investigating students' participation in the workforce were reported in *Working Students: The Nature and Effects of Participation in the Workforce by Senior Secondary Students*. Results included the following:

- There was considerable variation among the 12 government secondary schools taking part in the study, with the proportion of students engaged in paid employment ranging form 43 per cent to 80 per cent. No consistent pattern was found between males and females.
- A fairly consistent level of 25 to 30 per cent indicated they would not work because it would interfere with their study. The major reason expressed by working students was to have their own money.
- The retailing and food service industries accounted for the majority of the working students. Most worked between four and twelve hours a week. Most had little control over the days and times they worked.
- No relationship was found between students' immediate post-schooling plans and their rate of employment while at school.
- Involvement in paid work seemed to be unrelated to students' perceptions of the relevance of schooling, the way they are treated in school, their current rate of progress in school or the value of work experience organised by the school.
- Generally the study indicated that working has little effect on students' commitment to their schoolwork or social and recreational activities. Other research cited indicates that working may have various positive effects on students, although some authors indicated concerns.
- Senior students have come to occupy a definite niche in the workforce, and schools need to take account of this. Teachers may be able to exploit students' involvement in work in educational ways. However, there may be a tendency for schools to undervalue the qualities to which paid work gives expression.
- A picture that can be inferred from the study is one of young people who are able to organise their lives in order to have spending money while at school without affecting or sacrificing their valued social and leisure activities.

Non-government schools

For Catholic education in Queensland, a major step was taken in the development of a *Vision for Post Compulsory Education*. During 1991 several initiatives culminated in a major Statewide conference on post-compulsory education, which focused the draft vision statement towards more achievable outcomes. During 1991–92 this vision statement will be refined to become the basis of a series of action plans by schools to maximise the opportunities in post-compulsory education.

Related to these processes is the research project Future Secondary, which is being conducted in the Brisbane diocese. This project aims to rationalise the provision of secondary education for some 50 secondary schools involved.

Independent schools continued their commitment to the provision of a range of post-compulsory options to their students. A series of staff in-service programs and information dissemination through the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland and representation at conferences and seminars ensured recognition of the diversity of student interests and abilities.

School–industry links

During 1991 an increasing number of schools around the State became involved in school–industry links, using a number of different models. One of the greatest benefits has been the mutual learning and understanding which both industry and schools have gained. Examples of successful school–industry links included:

- the tremendous support provided in a number of very successful links by industry in terms of staff time, resources, expert advice, and in a few cases, financial support;
- the successful operation of the Teacher Replacement in Industry Program;
- the use of school–industry links as a support and resource in the teaching of TAFE curriculum in a school setting;
- the use of business/industry-developed modular courses (e.g. QCI and metal trades) by Catholic and independent schools.

In addition to the school–industry links activities, during 1991 the Department of Education implemented a pilot career education program using careers teachers in the two Mt Isa state high schools. This involved guidance support services in the planning, training, resourcing and support of the project.

Within the Catholic sector, almost every secondary school had a full-time career guidance officer to assist students to choose subjects at school and to explore other non-school options.

The guidance and career officers in independent schools availed themselves of every opportunity to maintain cognisance of changing demands so as to provide professional assistance to students.

School–TAFE links

In Queensland, school–TAFE links are very well established and take two basic forms: where the student studies the TAFE curriculum at a TAFE college; and where the student studies that TAFE curriculum in a school setting.

Examples of successful government school– TAFE links included:

- the involvement of selected schools from the Department of Education in the trialling of industry training modules in the metal industry and tourism and hospitality areas. Close networking with TAFE teachers trialling the same modules was of great mutual benefit;
- the use of work experience to support the student's TAFE curriculum studies and vice versa;
- mutual school–TAFE professional development associated with the teaching of the TAFE curriculum.

Independent schools continued to provide access for senior students in non-government schools to TAFE programs and initiated a non-government coordination program. The appointment of an officer in conjunction with Brisbane Catholic Education significantly enhanced access, equity and information flow.

Within Catholic education, TAFE/SEC link courses increased as schools continued to diversify their curriculum offerings. A growing number of teachers in Catholic schools acquired TAFE accreditation to teach TAFE subjects, and more schools gained site accreditations.

Areas of student learning

State curriculum reviews

Within the Department of Education, a Statewide review of the P–10 curriculum framework and its implementation was completed during 1991. As a result of wide consultation with the education community, recommendations about the P–10 curriculum were made in the two reports *Status Report and Recommendations: Rationale and Elements of the P–10 Curriculum* and *Status Report and Recommendations: Documentation and Implementation of the P–10 Curriculum.*

One of the major recommendations from the review was that in terms of future curriculum development and planning, the system should adopt a P–12 approach. In February 1991 a moratorium was placed on P–10 curriculum development except in mathematics, English language arts (ELA) and languages other than English (LOTE). Implementation of ELA and mathematics will continue in 1992.

Also in 1991, a ministerial curriculum management review was undertaken. Towards the end of 1990, this review was foreshadowed in *Focus on Schools*, with the recommendation that the Minister for Education establish a review group to reform the structures and processes used in the management of P–12 curriculum development, implementation, accreditation and student certification in Queensland ...'

The 1991 ministerial curriculum management review was headed by Professor Philip Hughes, who was appointed by the Minister as the principal reviewer. A major aspect of the review was to extend the consultations of *Education: Have Your Say* beyond the Department of Education to include Catholic and independent schools.

The report of the ministerial review, *Managing Curriculum Development in Queensland* (1991), aimed to improve the management of curriculum development, and its strong recommendations about improved decision-making processes, the use of developmental benchmarks, and improving equity of access to a high-quality common curriculum have been generally endorsed by non-government school authorities, parent organisations and the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools. The Department of Education is expected to take a firm position on the report by the end of 1992, when it is considered that a clearer picture will have emerged with respect to national agenda items which impinge upon curriculum.

English

Major activities

During 1991 major government school activities in this learning area included:

- the seeking of detailed Statewide comment on the drafts of the national statement on English;
- dissemination of the draft ELA syllabus materials to regions and the development of regional operational plans for the distribution and dissemination of such materials to schools;
- extensive professional development activities associated with the draft ELA syllabus materials, including the dissemination of an in-service module package to regions, a two-week training conference, training of ELA key teachers, and consultants' support of key teachers in the preparation of school strategies for ELA implementation and professional development;
- provision of resource lists to support the ELA syllabus: *Literature P–3: A Resource List; Literature 3–7: A Resource List; Non-fiction for English Programs, 7–10; Non-fiction for English Programs, 10–12*;
- extension of in-service materials to include visual literacy, grammar and spelling modules; and a rewrite of the Further Literacy Inservice Project (FLIP) materials to enhance years 4 to 10;
- completion of a range of projects funded under the State Literacy and Numeracy Initiative covering the following six key result areas: parent and community awareness and involvement, teacher development, assessment and support for children with special literacy needs, resource provision, curriculum development, and research. This included the finalisation of three key projects: Teacher Aides and Parent Supporters Program, Early Years Literacy Inservice Project (EYLIP), and reports on tests of aspects of reading and writing (see below).

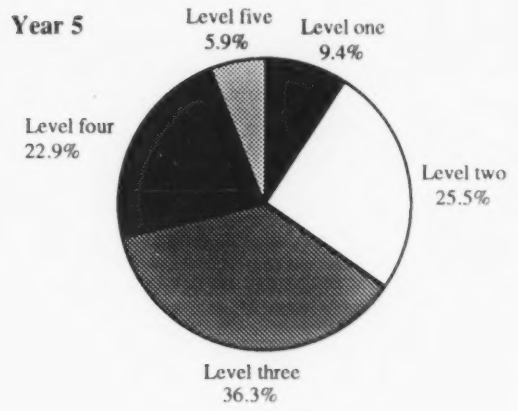
Similar to government schools, resources were allocated within Catholic education to the new P–10 syllabus in ELA. An extensive in-service education program was developed in conjunction with the Department of Education and implemented in many Catholic schools. It is anticipated that by December 1992, all Catholic schools will have conducted the appropriate in-service education program.

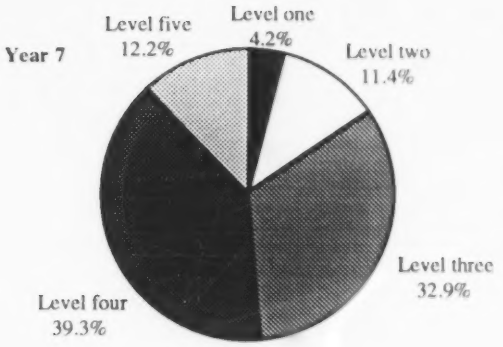
Results of a Statewide assessment program

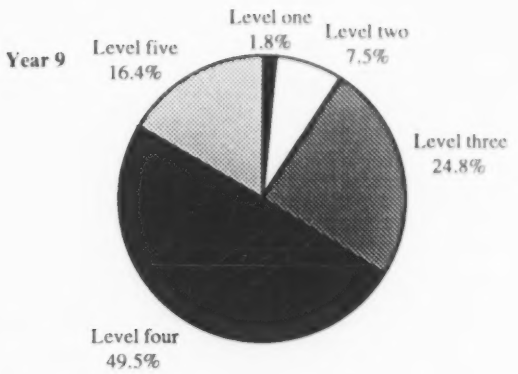
During 1991 results became available of tests on aspects of reading and writing undertaken late in 1990 as part of the Department of Education's Assessment of Performance Program. The program was implemented through light sampling (approximately 5 per cent) of students at three levels—years 5, 7 and 9—across state and non-state schools. The samples were drawn from all Queensland students in regular schooling, irrespective of their language, cultural or special needs backgrounds. In all, 14,300 students in more than 550 schools participated in the reading and writing components of the program.

One outcome of the Assessment of Performance Program was the development of overall reading and writing performance scales which represent the full range of reading and writing skills and processes demonstrated by years 5, 7, and 9 students involved in the program. It established five benchmark levels of overall reading and writing performance, ranging from level one—the lower end of the performance spectrum—through to level five. Pie charts contained in Figures 3 and 4 show the proportions of students in years 5, 7 and 9 performing within each of the five levels.

Figure 3. Overall reading performance of years 5, 7 and 9 students, government schools, Queensland, 1991

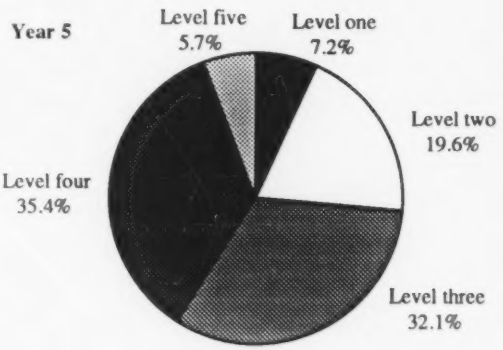


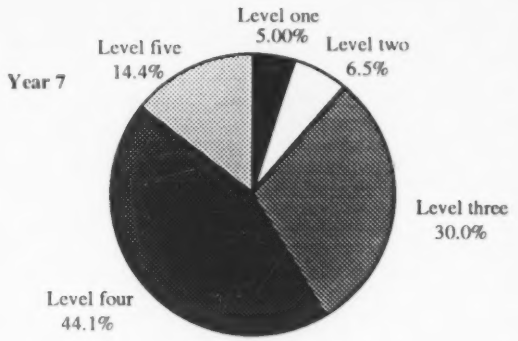


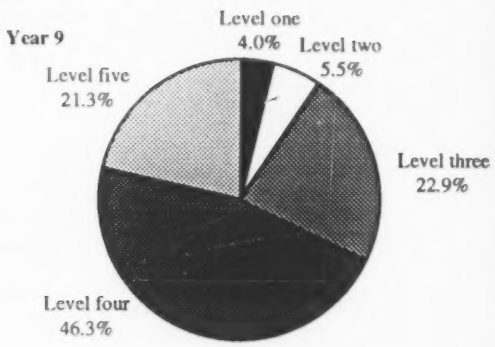


Source: Queensland Department of Education

Figure 4. Overall writing performance of years 5, 7 and 9 students, government schools, Queensland, 1991







Source: Queensland Department of Education

As can be seen from the figures, for both reading and writing there were small numbers of students displaying lower level skills at all year levels. On the other hand, all year levels have fairly substantial numbers of students demonstrating strong reading and writing performance. Taking all three years into account, the vast majority (80 per cent) demonstrated middle to higher level reading performance. In writing, nearly 85 per cent of students performed at the middle level or above. The vast majority were able to produce a first draft script with few spelling and punctuation errors.

Looking at separate year levels, the reading and writing performance of the typical year 5 student (as represented by the median or middle placed student on each of the scales) was characterised by such abilities as:

- locating and retrieving relevant information;
- using textual and contextual clues to determine the meaning of vocabulary and idiom;
- identifying the main ideas in a text;
- forming basic conclusions, judgements, hypotheses and predications;
- deploying correctly most language features such as grammar, spelling, vocabulary and punctuation;
- using competent composing skills to present factual information, fictional topics and attend to required information and detail.

Typical year 7 and year 9 students further demonstrated such reading and writing skills as:

- interpreting difficult vocabulary;
- logically sequencing scattered information;
- recognising and paraphrasing implicit relationships in a text;
- appreciating the intended effect of some authorial techniques such as exaggeration, repetition and sarcasm;
- using moderate composing skills in relation to both factual and fictional topics for a variety of audiences and purposes;
- deploying most key language features consistently and correctly;
- varying sentence length and structure to engage the reader's interest.

One of the features of the Assessment of Performance Program was the linking of present student performance to that of previous years. Comparisons of 1990 student performance with that of previous testing programs revealed virtually no difference in overall writing levels. In reading, performance was generally slightly stronger in the earlier programs, with the exception of one comparison of year 5 students' reading performance in which the overall levels were similar in both years.

Further details of the results may be found in *Assessment of Student Performance—Aspects of Reading and Writing: Overall Results* (Department of Education, 1991).

Languages other than English

Government schools

The Department of Education identifies languages other than English (LOTE) as a priority area for all years of schooling. The Government has allocated $65 million over the next ten years to implement the LOTE initiative.

The major aim of the LOTE initiative is the progressive expansion of access to LOTE learning for all students. Timelines to ensure the orderly introduction of the LOTE initiative are:

- all years 6, 7 and 8 by 1984;
- all years 1 to 8 by 2000;
- all years 9 to 12 with 20 per cent of year 12 having studied a LOTE to the final year by 2000.

The Government has nominated five priority languages in the LOTE initiative: Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Indonesian and Japanese. There will be a concentration of resources in the development of these languages. Spanish and Italian are also supported. A major aspect of the policy is the balance of Asian and European languages to be offered across the State.

During 1991, 44 per cent of primary schools (472) and 72 per cent of secondary schools (122) taught LOTE programs. Altogether, 68,026 students were involved. This represented an increase of 50 per cent in the number of students involved in 1989 (45,378 students). Departmental details are provided in Table 6.

Table 6. Students in government school LOTE programs, Queensland, 1991

Language	*Schools*	*Primary students*	*Secondary students*	*Total students*
Chinese	38	3,059	1,243	4,302
French	165	4,648	9,9361	4,584
German	170	4,951	11,327	16,278
Indonesian	27	1,386	1,226	2,612
Italian	77	3,553	1,423	4,976
Japanese	265	10,825	13,211	24,036
Spanish	7	784	0	784
Vietnamese	2	196	0	196
Greek	2	185	73	258
Total	****752***	***29,587***	***38,439***	***68,026***

* Some schools offer more than one language other than English

Source: Queensland Department of Education

The number of teachers involved in LOTE programs during 1990–91 was 102, while in 1991–92 this number increased to 202.

During 1991 LOTE initiatives included:

- finalisation of the establishment of the Languages and Culture Unit, which is responsible for a large range of both operational and policy/curriculum development tasks with a budget of $10.47 million for the 1991–92 year;
- maintenance and development of the Queensland LOTE Centre, which is an advisory and resource access centre;
- consolidation and expansion of LOTE clusters, in which very often a number of primary schools with one or more secondary schools participate in designing, developing, delivering and evaluating the same LOTE program;
- curriculum development to support and guide LOTE initiatives across the years P–12, and the development of a strategy and framework for the implementation of government policy on cultures in the general curriculum for P–10 children;
- the commencement of development of programs, lesson plans, support resources and video/audio materials for the years 6–8 LOTE program;
- expansion of the teacher exchange program and the provision of coordinated in-service programs to upgrade teachers' proficiency in LOTE teaching;
- the offering of scholarships to tertiary students to improve the supply of LOTE teachers. Up to January 1992, 34 scholarships had been offered, with benefits including living and incidental allowances and HECS payments.

Non-government schools

Within Catholic education, LOTE was also given high priority. Particular interest was expressed in Japanese and in the community languages in cooperation with community groups. The steady growth in interest among primary schools has led to the beginning of policy development in LOTE for Catholic schools.

Over 60 per cent of secondary students and 54 per cent of primary students in independent schools studied one or more LOTE. Most languages other than English were offered in a similar number of schools as in past years, and Japanese continued to be the growth language offered in 61 independent schools. The Association of Independent Schools of Queensland continued to collect data on LOTE in independent schools and produced resources primarily for use in independent schools but also offering access to other school systems on a national basis.

Science

During 1991 specific activities included:

- contribution to the preparation of the *National Statement on Science for Australian Schools;*
- preparation of the draft P–10 science curriculum and primary teaching guides *What Do Sudents Know about Science?* and *Predicting;*
- preparation, printing and distribution of *Topicbook 2, The Human Body: Guidelines for Secondary Schools Years 8–10;*
- a reprint of the secondary booklet *Safety Handbook for Schools—Science*, and drafting of a further edition to conform to the requirements of the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1989*;
- production of a joint Queensland Electricity Commission and Department of Education video *Electrical Safety*.

Technology

During 1991 government and non-government education authorities continued to contribute to the *National Statement on Technology for Australian Schools*, a draft of which was released on 12 December 1991.

Specific Statewide government school activities during 1991 included:

- the completion of the three-year Business Education Centres (BEC), when the final 74 of 230 secondary schools received their resources and commenced their programs;
- expansion of the Information Access Network (IAN), in which up to 60 users at a time were able to access information related to AAP news, special needs support services, information processing and technology support materials, departmental notices, purchase of computers and peripherals, and the department's Film and Video Library catalogue;
- expansion of the Telelearning Project, in which ongoing curriculum support and in-service was provided for the 17 telelearning school sites established since 1989;
- expansion of the Queensland Sunrise Centre, which catered for a total of 120 students, who were able to experiment with and integrate technological tools into the learning environment. Students had the use of laptop computers throughout the day and for home, and also used other technological classroom resources including scanners, CD ROM players, modems, printers, large monitors and LEGO Dacta materials;

- the operation of the Primary Computer Competency Program, which provided $750,000 for regionally focused professional development programs related to teaching with computers in primary classrooms;
- continuation of Electronic Mail, in which the department continued to operate its own network called EDUCATION QLD. Curriculum and resource information was provided for 6,574 students in 133 secondary schools doing Practical Computer Methods, while Information Processing and Technology was supported for 48 secondary schools. Non-government schools also participated in Electronic Mail;
- investigation of Special Needs Technology in which $50,000 was provided to Adaptive Technology Services, Low Incidence Support Centre for investigative research into the use of technology for students with special needs;
- the provision of over $2 million directly to schools to replace or repair computers.

During 1991 the department's use of technology for learning was the subject of a collaborative review, undertaken jointly by the department and the Treasury Department. The educational goals, achievements, implementation strategies, resources, teacher support services and management mechanisms were discussed and examined in consultation with regional managers, principals, teachers and students.

The findings of the report *Evaluation of the Learning Systems Project* (1991) were accepted as a basis for considering further developments in learning technology. The report indicated that learning technology had a positive impact on student learning. Improvement was noted in students' achievement standards, range of skills, motivation, self-confidence and willingness to cooperate and share tasks and information with others.

Other departmental activities included involvement in the Technology in Schools Project, which was conducted on behalf of the Pacific Circle Consortium. A report printed in 1991 featured technology projects from a number of Queensland schools.

A discussion paper was also produced entitled *The Integration of Technology Education into the P–10 and Senior Schooling Curriculum*. It grew out of the concern felt by some teachers, particularly of manual arts, that the term 'technology' was coming to be viewed in too specialised a way. This paper drew attention to a broader view of technology education in general education. Attention was drawn to the definition of technology adopted in the national statement— 'the development and application of ideas and practices to meet human needs through the process of designing, making and appraising'.

Mathematics

Policy activities in this learning area during 1991 included:

- contribution to the finalisation of the *National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools* through a network of reactors throughout Queensland;
- distribution of the national statement and the accompanying document *Mathematics in our Schools: A Guide for Parents and the Community* to all state schools in Queensland;
- arranging for the distribution of the draft mathematics profiles and the collection of feedback for the national project team;
- contribution, through Curriculum Corporation's National Mathematics Advisory Group, to the design of a project to prepare teaching materials for the Chance and Data strand in mathematics across years 1 to 10;
- work with officers of the Curriculum Development Unit in Tonga as part of an AIDAB project.

Statewide curriculum development, implementation and evaluation activities included:

- distribution to schools of the years 1 to 10 *Mathematics Sourcebook: Year 3;*
- the preparation for publication of the sourcebooks for years 1 to 10 mathematics: years 9/10 Book 1 and the completion of the writing of years 9/10 Book 2;
- collation of information from regional Mathematics Assessment Research Groups and preparation for printing of the report *Mathematics Assessment Alternatives: Item Bank*;
- the design and presentation of four TSN/11 satellite telecasts as professional development activity to support teachers of lower secondary mathematics; and
- the publication of the results of tests in aspects of mathematics which were administered in September 1990 to representative samples (approximately 5 per cent) of year 5, year 7 and year 9 students in government and non-state schools in Queensland. [Results were summarised in the 1990 *National Report* and details are available in the report *Assessment of Student Performance—Aspects of Mathematics: Overall Results* (1991).]

Studies of society and environment

National involvement in curriculum mapping

During 1991 the Department of Education coordinated the national project team, which prepared national curriculum

maps for the studies of society component of this AEC learning area. It was also involved in the project team for the environmental component.

For this national project, the major tasks were:

- formulation of a detailed questionnaire for use by each system, and the gathering of data and documents to support conclusions summarised in system responses;
- detailed analysis of data received from each system;
- validation of report text;
- preparation of final reports for publication by the Australian Education Council.

In September 1991 the *Studies of Society and Environment Curriculum Map* was published in two parts:

- Part A: Studies of Society;
- Part B: Environmental Education.

Statewide curriculum activity

In Statewide curriculum development, the major activities included:

- finalisation of a first draft social education syllabus for years 8 to 10 through work with 33 developmental schools;
- the letting of a contract to an external university research team for evaluation for all department publications concerned with P–10 social education;
- distribution of a resources review on teaching about State parliament and State government;
- the conduct of a detailed evaluation of the draft syllabus in social education for years 8–10 with developmental schools leading to the finalisation of a new draft;
- the collection of sample social education teaching units and other materials from schools, for the purpose of detailed planning of professional development;
- the support of cross-curricular initiatives through the compilation and dissemination of the resource list *Environmental Education P–12*.

The arts

Music education

Throughout 1991 music education programs in Queensland government schools continued to develop.

In classroom music for years P–7, 269.8 (FTE) music teachers serviced 432 government schools, and in years 8–12, services were offered to 167 government secondary schools by 214 music teachers.

The Instrumental Music Program had 200 (FTE) music instructors servicing 415 primary and 145 secondary government schools, with almost 34,000 students receiving instruction.

The Musical Instrument Centre continued its repair service for departmental woodwind and brass instruments. The Statewide Music Resource Centre provided ongoing service lending scores and recordings to schools.

Specific activities occurring during the year included:

- the completion of the Statewide implementation of the *Instrumental Music Curriculum Guide;*
- the attendance by music teachers and students at eight workshops that were held in conjunction with the Brisbane Biennial International Festival of Music;
- the conduct of two 10-week full-time music teacher in-service courses to train or retrain a total of 35 primary music teachers;
- the attendance of 70 musically outstanding students (MOST) from throughout the State at an intensive 12-day program conducted at Griffith University. The 70 students were placed into a symphonic wind ensemble (44) or string orchestra (26), as well as into either a symphony orchestra or chamber ensemble. All 70 students also participated in choral work and in the final concert at the Queensland Performing Arts Complex on 4 July.

Art education

Major curriculum related activities occurring during 1991 included:

- publication of *Living by Design* Books 1 and 2 (years 1, 2 and 3), and distribution to schools, regional offices and education centres;
- continued trialling in schools of strategies for *Living By Design* Book 3 (years 4 and 5);
- the production of three videos which focused on contemporary Queensland artists and galleries for use as resources in Queensland schools;
- a focus on the application of computer technology to art education.

Professional development activities included:

- collaboration with the Academy of Arts, Queensland University of Technology, on the convening of a secondary art teacher pre-service and professional development forums;
- regional involvement in professional development by art education officers.

In addition, 1991 saw:

- the operation of the 1991 Minister's Awards for Excellence in Art Education (12 regional exhibitions and one State exhibition);
- expansion of the Artists/Designers in School Program to schools in remote areas of the State.

Other arts activities

During 1991 arts performances arranged by the Queensland Arts Council for primary and secondary government schools totalled 6,463. Some workshops were also provided.

A review of policies on Queensland Arts Council activities and entertainers was undertaken and a system was put in place to extend audition assessment panels to include 20 personnel from Brisbane metropolitan or near-metropolitan areas.

Throughout the year, further development was carried out also on curriculum guides for dance, drama and media studies.

Health

Government schools

Curriculum development

Statewide curriculum development during 1991 included:

- development to draft stage of the syllabuses for health and physical education for years 1–10;
- the development of an outdoor education package which includes policy and procedures, a curriculum guide and a video;
- publication of a revised safety handbook for physical education, outdoor education and sport;
- the production of a video on rugby codes, which aims to promote safety in rugby. The video covers prevention of injury, skills training, and treatment, and is accompanied by teachers' notes, brochures and posters.

Health education

During 1991 the Schools Better Health Project, funded by the Department of Health, addressed the national goals of health education. Major activities included:

- a nutrition education project which focused on curriculum, the school environment (including the tuckshop) and increased parental and community involvement. A project officer was appointed and a pilot program was conducted at Dalby State High school;
- a sun safety project in which a project officer worked with officers of the departments of Education and Health, the Queensland Cancer Fund and the Cancer Prevention Research Centre of the University of Queensland. An evaluation conducted with year 8 and 9 students identified levels of knowledge, attitudes and behaviour related to sun safety. An intervention program will be completed in 1992.

During 1991 also, the Queensland Government trialled a skin awareness program, distributing Sun Smart kits to year 1 students throughout Queensland. This campaign is being extended to include preschool, primary and special school students.

Drug and alcohol education

Specific activities during 1991 included:

- endorsement by Cabinet of the final report of the Queensland School Drug Education Program's evaluation committee;
- dissemination of the binge drinking prevention program Thrills Without Spills to regions;
- hosting of the Third International Conference on Drug Abuse Prevention in Schools in Brisbane. This was attended by 200 local and 70 overseas delegates;
- the joint department–University of Queensland hosting of the First National HIV/AIDS School Educators Workshop. This was attended by personnel from all Australian States and Territories and New Zealand;
- support given to regions in the area of policy and resources for AIDS and drug education.

Sport

Initiatives in this area in 1991 included the following:

- approval by the Minister for Education for the establishment of the Queensland Junior Sports Council in which four government departments will be involved;
- acceptance of most recommendations of the Conference of Directors-General report on interstate sporting competitions, thus ensuring that these competitions will continue to have a place in contemporary school education;
- the issuing of over 2000 coaching certificates as a result of accreditation courses conducted by the Queensland State Schools Sports Council;
- continuing support given to teachers and community groups through the Australian Sports Commission-funded Aussie Sports projects.

Religious education

Following a recommendation made in the first report of the P–10 curriculum review that the department 'clarify the position of religious education in the compulsory curriculum', consultations were held across the State in October 1991.

Subsequently a *Scenarios Paper* was developed and circulated throughout Queensland. This paper focused on the possibility of additional religious education provisions for which the department would be responsible. Extensive consultations are continuing in 1992 on the issues raised through the *Scenarios Paper*.

During 1991 consultations were initiated on the place and role of chaplaincy services in government schools. A working party formed to consider this matter is due to make a final report by June 1992.

Human relationships education

The implementation of human relationships education continued to make steady progress. By September 1991, the third year of a five-year implementation strategy, the following had occurred:

- Stage 1—Advocacy, which involved awareness raising, and the encouragement of the involvement of all members of school communities;
- Stage 2—Implementation, which involved the forming of school community consultative committees, and the development, endorsement and implementation of proposals;
- Stage 3—Maintenance, which involved the reviewing and evaluation of progress, and the development of networks.

The program continued to influence and be influenced by other system priorities, namely community consultation, inclusive curriculum, equity and a supportive school environment.

Non-government schools

For Catholic education, personal development education occupied considerable time. In this course, attention was focused on a number of current social issues, particularly those related to drugs, AIDS, pornography, prostitution and violence (particularly domestic violence). The continued need to research these issues and share in the development of curriculum materials suitable for schools is time-consuming and expensive. Nevertheless, Catholic education and other branches of the Church have continued their educative efforts in this subject area which is so integral to the ethos of Catholic schools.

Independent schools acknowledge the importance of a range of personal issues and implications. These continued to be incorporated in religious education, Christian knowledge and pastoral care areas. Resources to support current information have been purchased by many schools.

Early childhood education

During 1991 Department of Education curriculum activities in this area included:

- the drafting of several policy statements including *A Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Education: A Policy Perspective; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Education Policy; Guidelines for the Management of Preschool Facilities;* and *Communities of Learners*;
- the development of early education curriculum materials including *Movement and the Young Child* (2nd edition), *Focus on Movement Cards* (2nd edition), and workshops for years 1–3 teachers on the implications for classroom practice of the document *Language and the Young Child.*
- development of early education for early education teachers which supported the use of the television program *Lift Off* with 3–8-year-olds;
- a review of early special education in Queensland which identified issues, concerns and needs of early special educators and parents, and ascertained current service levels and populations.

Teaching and learning

Award restructuring

Government schools

At 30 June 1991 there were 27,284 teachers employed in Queensland government schools, comprising 1,069 in preschool, 13,322 in primary, 10,764 in secondary and 2,129 in special schools. During 1991 the number of permanent part-time teachers was 755, comprising 2.8 per cent of the workforce.

On 1 March, the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) approved a new classification structure for promotional positions. The new structure is based on work value levels determined by the application of the Cullen Egan Dell evaluation methodology. The use of this methodology represents a significant change from an enrolment-driven classification model to one which provides a classification profile common to all sectors of schooling based on a range of discrete subfactors.

Non-promotional positions were also allocated to a revised banding structure in a continuation of the special case for streamlining of the Teachers' Award—State.

In a decision of 8 July, the QIRC approved the establishment of the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) classification. The department developed its procedures for the first major round of AST 1 selection effective from 1 January 1992.

A range of other award-restructuring initiatives were advanced during 1991. They included:

- a project to determine the work value and appropriate classification for Senior Teachers and Teachers-in-Charge of Special Education Units and of Officers-in-Charge of Outdoor and Environmental Education Centres;
- the establishment of the Evaluation Review Committee (ERC), comprising departmental and union representatives, to oversee job evaluation issues. A limited number of formal reviews of school promotional positions was conducted during this period.

Non-government schools

The industrial/professional developments occasioned by the new Teachers Award (Non-government) consumed a great deal of time, particularly with respect to the new classification of Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs). The Catholic school sector developed a stringent set of criteria for the selection of AST 1 applicants, and it is expected that by term 2, 1992 all AST 1 appointments will have been made.

In addition, new Positions of Added Responsibility will be created. It is expected that these positions and those of ASTs will provide additional career paths for teachers and rewards for their skills in ways which will enhance student learning.

While many independent schools already had a range of middle-management positions considered necessary to fulfil their stated philosophical policy, positions of responsibility and management particularly relating to AST 1 positions were reconsidered as a result of award restructuring. In addition to compliance with industrial requirements, independent schools in general responded to school community decisions designed to enhance student outcomes and staff career paths.

Recruitment and selection

Recruiting and selecting a quality teaching force remained a high priority of the Department of Education.

During 1991 considerable changes occurred in the recruitment and selection process for applicants seeking employment as teachers. The process was managed by a coordinating team, who communicated with regions, applicants and tertiary institutions involved with teacher preparation. Interview panels were formed, who interviewed both graduates with no formal teacher employment history and general applicants seeking a return to teaching. A major departure from previous practice was the use of practising teachers to interview teachers.

Characteristics of the interviews included:

- the development of an applicant profile. In the case of graduates, interview scores were combined with a score from their academic records, while in the case of general applicants, additional questions were asked to assess knowledge in the areas of teaching and learning. Thus the possible total score for graduates and general applicants was the same;
- the translation of the scores to a rating from suitable S1 (highest) down to S6 (unsuitable). These ratings were received by applicants, and employment offers were made on the basis of merit demonstrated in the overall suitability rating;
- the ability of applicants, in some circumstances, to have a review interview, where they felt the rating did not truly represent their potential.

Workforce equity

During 1991 an analysis of the employment profile of the Department of Education was undertaken, and was subsequently documented in two reports: *Towards Equity of Staff: Equal Employment Opportunity Report* and *Career Opportunities for Teachers in the Department of Education, Queensland.*

The Equity (Workforce and Studies) Directorate was established in 1991 to oversee strategic planning for equal employment opportunity and social justice for students.

An Equal Employment Opportunity Consultative Committee was established as a mechanism for consulting with unions and employees on the development of the department's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan, as required under the Queensland *Equal Employment Opportunity in Public Employment Act 1991.*

The following initial equity (workforce and studies) priorities were identified for action by the department:

- review of resource allocation, e.g. funding formulae, staffing formulae, to take account of educational complexity;
- development of sexual harassment policy and grievance procedures for staff and students;
- development of non-discriminatory language policy and guidelines for all employees;
- training and development programs for employees in relation to the above policy areas and other issues related to the Queensland anti-discrimination legislation;
- establishment of a system of trained equity representatives on all selection panels;
- mapping of facilities required for disability access for staff and students;

- anti-discrimination grievance procedures for staff and students;
- improved award provisions for teacher aides and other non-teaching para-professionals.

Effective learning and teaching

Government schools

During 1991 the Effective Teaching and Learning Unit was established within the Department of Education to plan and develop policies and projects which promote effective learning and teaching practices in Queensland government schools. Activities supporting this aim (and not mentioned elsewhere) included:

- development of the Literacy and Numeracy Diagnostic Assessment (LANDA) Project, which aims to improve the quality of instruction for students. The project's emphasis is designed to assist teachers and support personnel to identify and to address with better understanding the learning requirements of students—particularly those with special needs;
- evaluation of resources which resulted in such activities as the trialling of the draft publication *Resource in Learning: A Focus on School Development*; development of two manuals, *Resource Management for Schools with Teacher-Librarians* and *Resource Management for Schools and Centres without Teacher-Librarians*; provision of resource lists to support senior secondary curriculum for journalism, tourism and catering; development of fully processed resource collections for new schools; evaluation of automation systems; and ongoing monitoring using the range of ASCIS products and services and ASCISRECON;
- provision of three-day workshops for school teams on cooperative planning and teaching;
- publication and dissemination of student portfolio materials which include guidelines, a video designed for teachers and students, a poster *Me and My Portfolio*, and an audio cassette of the rap song *Me and My Portfolio*.

Non-government schools

Catholic schools also continued to explore better ways of teaching and learning. Highlights included:

- cooperation with universities and others in research and in the development of pedagogical and organisational changes which promote student achievement;
- participation in a Futures Conference organised by the Ministerial Consultative Council on Curriculum in Queensland, which examined a new vision for our society and new roles for schools and curriculum in such a society;
- development of a project called Educating Globally, which is built on holistic concepts of teaching and learning and which integrates well with much of the current research into skill development.

Despite limited human resources in the independent school sector, where possible, in-service programs to maintain an understanding of curriculum changes and development in government schools were offered through the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland.

Resourcing Queensland's schools

A total of $2,106.7 million was appropriated for the Education Budget for 1991–92. This represented an increase of 9.8 per cent over the comparable appropriation in 1990–91.

Major government schooling initiatives announced in the budget included:

- introduction of a remote area incentives scheme at a cost of $3.2 million to attract teachers to, and retain them in, schools in remote locations of the State;
- strengthening of student literacy and numeracy through a series of initiatives for which $5.1 million was allocated;
- allocation of $11.9 million to support the teaching of languages other than English (LOTE) in primary and secondary schools;
- provision of $2.8 million to allow schools to maintain their information technology base;
- allocation of $1 million to facilitate the implementation of the FORMULA school administration system;
- employment of 372 additional teachers, plus 100 extra teachers under the LOTE program;
- opening of five new preschools, four new primary schools and four new secondary schools.

Major non-state school initiatives announced in the Budget included:

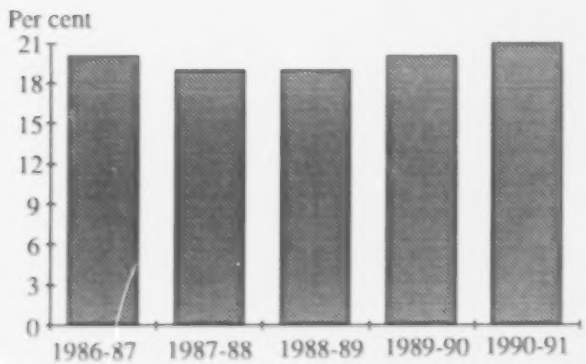
- the introduction of a needs-based component into the funding of non-state schools. To allow for the introduction of the needs-based component (in 1992), per capita grants to non-state schools remained at $582 for primary school students and $933 for secondary school students;

- the allocation of funds to meet the State's contribution to costs associated with restructuring of teachers' awards;
- $19.9 million allocated to the Loan Interest Subsidy Scheme, and $1.5 million for capital assistance to grammar schools;
- $13.2 million assistance for creche and kindergarten education;
- $2.3 million to a range of non-state schools which provide special education programs, and to other voluntary associations providing educational support services.

A total of $7.1 million was also allocated for implementation of the recommendations of the Tertiary Entrance Review (Viviani report).

The proportion of total government recurrent expenditure provided for government and non-government students from preschool to year 12, including special students, increased from 19 per cent in 1987–88 and 1988–89 to 21 per cent in 1990–91.

Figure 5. Queensland government recurrent expenditure on schools as percentage of total government outlays, selected years



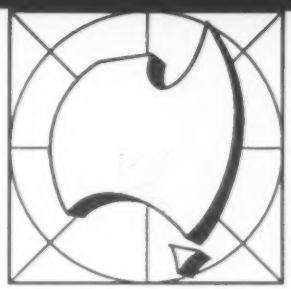
Source: Queensland Department of Education

Expenditure increases are reflected in the increase in expenditure on government school primary, secondary and special students from $3,300 per student in 1988–89 to $4,200 per student in 1990–91.

During 1991 the Department of Education also attended to revenue aspects through the maintenance of an entrepreneurial presence in the area of educational goods and services. Highlights included:

- the enrolment of 110 overseas students (at January 1991);
- overseas consultancies in Laos and Tonga, in conjunction with the Queensland Education Consortium;
- the holding of the second Australia-Japan Youth Expo and Fair in Brisbane, with 250 students from more than 30 diverse sporting and cultural groups;
- the sale of Queensland-produced educational materials to schools, educational institutions and authorities interstate and overseas—including the distribution of educational computer software in the United States of America.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



This chapter presents an overview of the provision of schooling in South Australia in 1991. It was prepared by officers of the Education Department and includes contributions from the Catholic and independent sectors following close consultation with the Catholic Education Office and the Independent Schools Board. Most non-government schools are affiliated with one or other of these agencies.

Priority objectives

Government schools

The department's general purpose, given in the *National Report on Schooling in Australia 1990*, remains unchanged. All schools' plans for development and operations are based upon the objectives of the department's Three Year Plan, 1991–93:

- to improve the capacity of the Education Department to anticipate and respond to change;
- to improve school curriculum and the process of teaching and learning;
- to promote equality of educational opportunity for students;
- to improve the operations of schools;
- to manage our resources better;
- to raise public awareness of the achievements and major directions of state education.

These objectives are in accordance with AEC Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia. Strategies to improve school curriculum and the process of teaching and learning require the department 'to ensure alignment between the South Australian curriculum and agreed national goals of schooling in Australia'. Further, the department's curriculum policy *Educating for the 21st Century, a Charter for Public Schooling in South Australia* takes into account and complements the national goals.

Catholic schools

In 1991 Catholic schools aimed to:

- prepare for the South Australian Certificate of Education (years 11 and 12);
- improve student literacy;
- support whole-school planning;
- implement the National Policy for the Education of Girls;
- develop policies to support languages other than English programs;
- support disadvantaged students;
- provide special education support.

Catholic schools acknowledge the importance of the national goals in educational planning and policy.

Independent schools

All independent schools in South Australia aim to provide students with the education which will encourage them to develop to their full potential in all areas of life. Priorities in 1991 were to:

- maintain and develop programs for disadvantaged students;
- increase student awareness of geo-political links with Asian countries and of historical links with Europe;
- continue to encourage teachers to develop their professional skills;
- continue to provide a balanced curriculum at both primary and secondary levels of schooling, focusing on teaching and learning in the key areas of literacy, languages, mathematics, science and technology.

The achievements of independent schools in adopting these objectives have been significant in the provision of programs for special education and in the revitalisation of languages other than English. These achievements align with the national goals for schooling and in particular with goal clusters under the excellence and equity banner and areas of student learning.

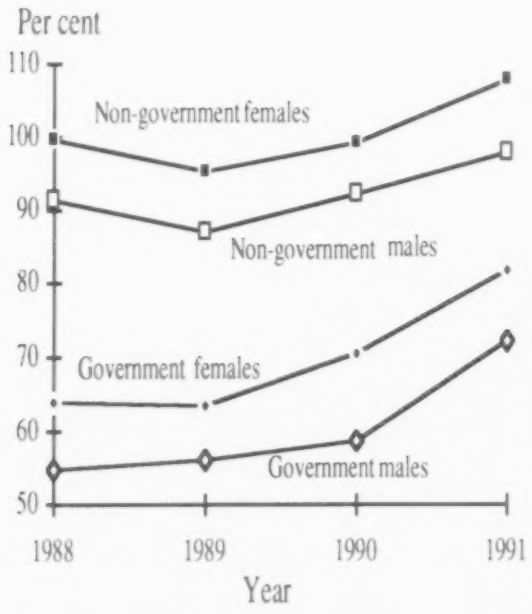
Excellence and equity

Retention and participation in government and non-government schools

Apparent retention rates continued to increase. In government schools some of this increase was due to students continuing at school longer to complete or improve final-year results. A further factor was the number of adult students enrolling at government schools, including the nine senior secondary schools which have special facilities and organisation to accommodate them.

High retention rates were maintained through to year 12 in non-government schools due to such factors as the tertiary aspirations of students and parents, the availability of boarding facilities for country and overseas students and the ability to complete tertiary entrance requirements over two years. An increase in subject areas also encouraged some students to stay longer at school.

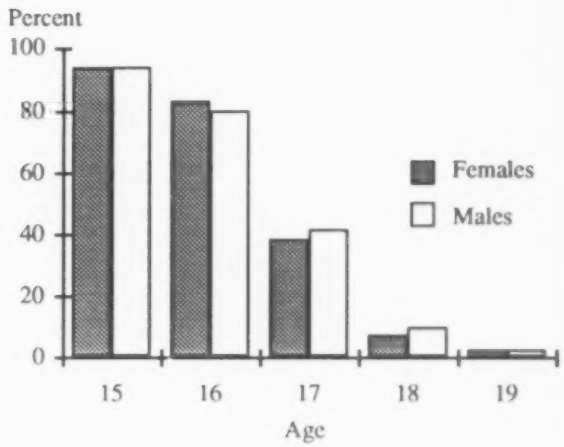
Figure 1. Apparent year 12 retention rates, selected years



Source: DEET

Overall, 43.5 per cent of males between 15 and 19 years of age participated in schooling and 42.5 per cent of females. For each year level, participation rates were higher in 1991 than in 1990.

Figure 2. Age participation rates, government and non-government schools, South Australia, 1991



Source: DEET

Figure 2 shows that amongst 17- and 18-year-olds, higher percentages of males than females remained at school in 1991. On the other hand there was a higher proportion of 16-year-old females. Similar proportions of males and females in the 15- and 19-year-old age groups participated in schooling.

Effective schools

Government schools

In 1991 the Education Department continued to operate with three central directorates, namely Curriculum, Personnel and Resources, and five area directorates. However, following extensive review the department made a submission to government in August. The submission contained a proposal for a major restructure designed to improve efficiency and to focus the work of the department more clearly on the needs of schools.

Increased involvement of schools in school-based management is proposed in order to:

- make schools more responsive to student learning needs;
- provide schools with greater flexibility and control over resources;
- provide a more conducive environment for school development;
- improve the efficiency and effectiveness of educational management.

During 1991 implementation of the parent participation policy, Parents and Schools, continued. A support publication and a video were distributed widely. Standing committees were established and 'parent and student' grants were allocated for 98 programs. Particular emphasis was given to involving parents in the decision-making processes of schools and to ensuring increased participation by parents from disadvantaged groups.

In the new structure, it is proposed that school councils' powers will be increased so that they have authority in relation to educational policy and resource allocation.

To improve the effectiveness of schooling for young adolescents, the Junior Secondary Review has been conducting extensive consultations with teachers and school leaders on needs and practices in junior secondary education. Also in 1991, with the cooperation of the department's Education Review Unit (ERU), the review team surveyed some 600 to 800 students in years 6 to 11 on their perceptions of the value of schooling, relationships with teachers and the transition from primary to secondary school. The results of this study and the recommendations arising will be available in 1992.

Oral history project

In addition, parents have been extensively consulted on the directions of the review. This has been carried out in cooperation with the ERU and also with parent organisations and ethnic community groups.

Catholic and independent schools

Most non-government schools are managed by school boards who provide:

- policy direction to educational programs;
- developmental planning;
- pastoral care;
- financial management.

To ensure effective schools, support is provided by the Catholic Education Office for the induction and development of school board members and to support the boards in the sound management of their business. In addition, student and staff social and emotional well-being is an important aspect of the Catholic school's pastoral responsibility.

Of their nature, independent schools have a firm basis for effectiveness. Parental freedom of choice of school is seen as a common link between independent schools and seen by them as a means of enhancing the effectiveness of their governance. This choice spans a range of educational philosophies offered by 80 schools in South Australia. The responsibility for decisions rests with the governing body of each school and accountability for decisions is primarily to the parents of students in the school community. Under this model decisions are made close to those most likely to be affected.

Research into the effectiveness of independent school governance and educational leadership is being recommended under the Good Schools Strategy as a national research project.

Equity initiatives

Government schools

Equity

The Education Department has a continuing commitment to equity in policy and practice. The Government's Social Justice Strategy requires the Education Department to pay particular attention to the educational outcomes of those groups of students who have traditionally benefited less from schooling than other groups. The department's Social Justice Action Plan was finalised in 1991. Objectives and strategies for all levels of the organisation were identified. Particular emphasis was placed on setting targets to improve student attendance and retention.

The State Youth Strategy, which aims to re-involve young people in education, employment or training, continued to be supported by the Education Department.

Many schools in both metropolitan and country areas have included social justice measures in their development plans.

All school reviews conducted in 1991 by the Education Review Unit included a component dealing with equality of educational opportunity. The nature of the school community was taken into account in planning the reviews. Efforts were made to ensure that students and parents from all groups in the school community provided information. Where necessary, recommendations were made to schools on improving their provisions for particular groups of students.

Education of girls

In 1991 the Three Year Action Plan for the Education of Girls was launched. Curriculum materials to support the implementation of the plan were distributed to schools. The three objectives of the plan are:

- to broaden post-school options for girls;
- to increase the participation of girls in mathematics, science and technology;
- to provide a supportive learning environment for girls, including pregnant girls and teenage mothers.

Eight additional curriculum documents were published in 1991. Some of the publications were based on research into the schooling experiences of girls in government schools and provide information for educators about emerging issues in girls' education. The other documents focused on descriptions of effective teacher practice in relation to girls. One document presented a program for teaching young girls and boys about sexual harassment.

A program of seminars based on these curriculum materials was offered throughout the year. A conference and a report on girls and the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) were the result of collaboration between the department's Secondary Education Team and Education of Girls Unit. Work education and literacy for girls were among the issues examined by conference participants.

A consultant was appointed through the Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project for the National English Curriculum. A monograph, *Girls' Learning and English*, will be produced as part of this project.

In addition, under the South Australian Education Department Social Justice Strategy, four full-time equivalent salaries were shared by the three girls-only high schools and nine metropolitan high schools which had significantly fewer girls than boys. Programs which were developed for the girls in these schools have been documented for use throughout the system.

Distance and rural education

The Country Areas Program (CAP) is funded by the Commonwealth Government to address educational disadvantage experienced by students who are geographically isolated.

In 1991 initiatives included:

- preliminary research in the area of rural poverty to determine its impact on CAP schools;
- the establishment of a rural schooling resource collection for schools and the wider system;
- the development and implementation of training programs for regional committee members which focused on curriculum issues for country students;
- providing training and development for CAP-funded teachers to support the documentation and evaluation of funded programs.

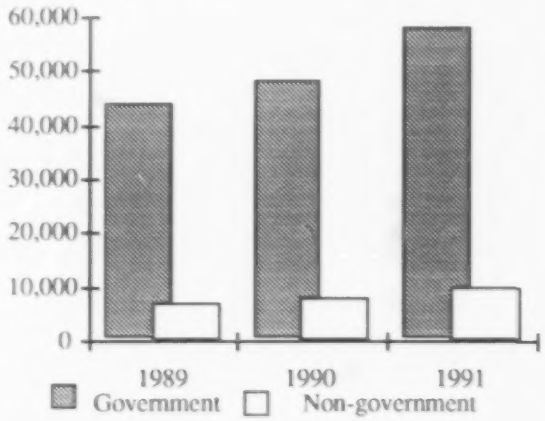
A project investigated the schooling experience of girls in rural areas. Preliminary investigations of student attendance and transience in rural areas were also undertaken.

The Open Access College, officially opened in 1991, caters for geographically remote students and itinerant families as well as medically referred students, those travelling interstate or overseas and adult students.

Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds

The School Card Scheme is a means-tested program providing assistance for low-income families towards the cost of school books and charges. Allowances were increased in 1991 to $106 for each primary approved student and $159 for each secondary approved student. A total of $6.1 million was provided to government school students under this program.

Figure 3. Number of SA card holders by sector, 1989–91



Source: SA Education Department

In South Australia, the Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) targets schools with high percentages of School Card holders taken over a three-year period.

A major review of the criteria for assessing applications for DSP funding was undertaken. In line with the Education Department's Social Justice Action Plan, applications are required to focus on student learning, contribute to the schools' development plans, have identified affirmative action strategies and involve parents.

Investigative projects undertaken by field officers included:

- literacy as a prerequisite to participation and attainment;
- the relationship between supportive learning environments and learning outcome for Aboriginal students;

- documentation of the evaluations of some 40 school-based funded programs.

Secondary ESL class

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

The English as a Second Language Program (ESL) provides specialist services to students from non-English speaking backgrounds. The General Support element is for students who have been in Australia over 12 months. The New Arrivals Program (NAP) is for students who have been in Australia under 12 months. Initiatives in 1991 included:

- identification of ESL support schools providing an ESL focus for surrounding schools;
- development of ESL materials to promote the successful transition of students to mainstream schools;
- continued implementation of ESL in the Mainstream Teacher Development Course;
- development of an assessment mechanism for the learning needs of students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

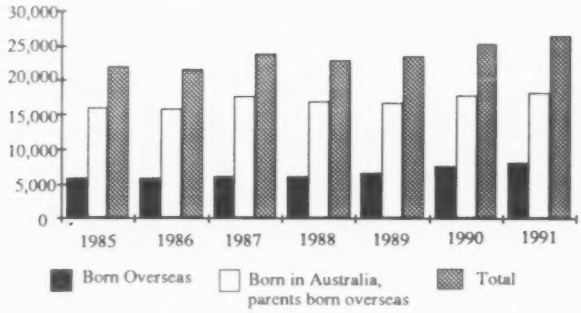
Achievements of the Multiculturalism in Education Project have been:

- provision of training and development on critical issues arising from the report *Schooling Outcomes of Students from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds*;
- development of Supportive School Environment programs for change;
- completion of case-study research on learning outcomes of students from non-English speaking backgrounds in mathematics;
- the development of the Multicultural Management Commitment Plan 1991–1993.

The Multicultural Management Commitment Plan comprises objectives, strategies and expected outcomes for managing cultural and linguistic diversity in six key performance areas: client services, settlement services for new arrivals, economic development, human resource management, social justice, and ethnicity data collection.

Figure 4 shows the rise in numbers of students from non-English speaking backgrounds (excluding Aborigines) since 1985.

Figure 4. Students from non-English speaking backgrounds in SA government schools, 1985–91



Source: SA Education Department

Students at Risk Program

The Students at Risk Program is a joint Commonwealth–State initiative to support students who are at risk of leaving school before completing year 12.

During 1991 the ten participating secondary schools developed and tested programs and strategies to support the attendance and participation of identified students. Attention was paid to administrative procedures at a school level, the development of appropriate programs for individual students and training and development programs for staff.

Students with disabilities

The Students with Disabilities policy was launched in July 1991. The policy aims to improve the learning outcomes of students with disabilities through the continued development of appropriate curriculum and effective delivery of services.

Support for implementation of the policy is provided through:

- the Negotiated Curriculum Plan. This is a framework for negotiating and documenting a plan of action to enable each student's access to and participation in the school's curriculum;
- the Collaborative Action Plan. Drafted in 1991 by the Education Department, the Health Commission and the Special Education Consultative Committee, this plan will provide for students with severe multiple disabilities who enrol in their neighbourhood schools as the first point of access to schooling.

Gifted and talented students

Special interest centres have been established at six suburban high schools—four in music and one each in agriculture and languages. Entry is based on aptitude and ability.

One primary school caters for students who show potential in the field of gymnastics, while a number of schools have established networks to support each other in the development of those students who are gifted and talented in particular areas.

Considerable work was undertaken to develop education services for students with high intellectual potential. A working party including representatives of the SA Association for Gifted and Talented Children and the tertiary sector produced a proposal for a new program in this area. A network of focus schools will be established to train teachers in the identification of students with high intellectual potential and in the provision of appropriate educational programs.

Aboriginal education

The National Aboriginal Education Policy (NAEP) was in its second year of implementation in 1991. Outcomes included:

- One hundred and twenty Aboriginal Education Workers, 42 Aboriginal Education Resource Teachers and other staff were employed to realise the aims of NAEP.
- Ninety-eight Aboriginal parent–school committees were established.
- There was increased devolution of responsibility to Anangu communities in school curriculum/operations.
- Greatly increased numbers of Aboriginal students had access to Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) tutoring.
- Three further Aboriginal Studies courses, making a total of 17, were published.
- One hundred and sixty-eight primary schools undertook training and development in Aboriginal studies.
- Eighty-four students enrolled in year 12, giving an apparent year 8 to year 12 retention rate of 25 per cent (government schools).

Studying Nunga culture

Catholic schools

Education of girls

Three school-based projects aimed to highlight the connection of equity issues involving girls' and boys' learning and students with special needs, with excellence in teaching, school administration and learning. The National Policy for the Education of Girls and the National Catholic Education Commission's commitment were central to the projects' considerations.

In line with national policy, projects aimed to:

- raise the awareness of the educational needs of girls;
- provide equal access to and participation in curriculum;
- support educational environment;
- provide equitable resource allocation.

The education of boys was also a significant component of the Gender and Equity Project, particularly in raising awareness of the destructive elements of the gender stereotyping of men and masculinity, and the need to foster cooperative, collaborative, non-violent relations between women and men on both professional and personal levels.

Hence, in striving for excellence and examining the hindrances created by gender inequities, the project officers considered the following:

- girls' and boys' learning;
- single-sex and coeducational schools;
- curriculum and methodology;
- inclusive language;
- special needs (e.g. NESB, Aboriginal, disability, disadvantaged schools);
- stereotyping of masculinity and femininity.

Other special populations

Other special populations support was provided by the English as a Second Language, Disadvantaged Schools, Country Areas and the Aboriginal Education programs. A feature of these programs was the level of cooperation with other school system staff on joint initiatives.

Independent schools

Educational provision for girls

Schools continued to encourage teachers to recognise the needs of girls and provide opportunities for full achievement. Most schools work within the framework of the National Policy for the Education of Girls. To this end school-based initiatives in girls' education reflect the various educational philosophies of independent schools and are focused on the development of the full potential of the student. School-based policy development is providing opportunities for girls to increase their participation in mathematics, science and technology and broaden their post-school options.

Rural and distance education

Established schools are found in a number of rural centres across South Australia and offer in the main a primary level of education. At the secondary level the provision of boarding facilities continues to be an important resource to the education of students from rural communities.

Education of students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds

A significant proportion of independent schools attracts students from communities who live in poverty or who come from low-income areas. During 1991 a review of the index of disadvantage used to assess the eligibility of schools in the Commonwealth Disadvantaged Schools Program indicated an increase from two to five in the number of schools to be targeted from 1992. The program will provide additional project-based funds to enhance the resources in these schools to increase the participation of parents and enable additional teacher and curriculum development opportunities.

Special education

In 1991, 57 schools enrolled 210 students with moderate, severe or profound disabilities. Support for these schools and the particular teachers and students concerned was offered through a cooperative school networking strategy which attracted funding for the appointment of specialist/advisory staff. The network staff offer schools, in particular classroom teachers, programming advice, specific one-to-one support and professional development support. A significant outcome of the network has been the focus its staff have provided for school collaboration with other agencies, e.g. the Adelaide Children's Hospital and the Institute for the Study of Learning Difficulties at Flinders University.

General and vocational education

Government schools

Response to the Finn Report

The Finn Report has received acceptance in South Australia. Its aim to broaden the post-compulsory curriculum is reflected in the development of the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

South Australia will be monitoring the development of the employment-related competencies by the Mayer Committee as they relate to SACE, to the recently developed attainment levels for reception to year 10 and to the assessment of the described essential skills and understandings affecting the years from reception to 12. A committee representing the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of SA (SSABSA), employers, unions, higher education and the schooling sectors has worked to advise on the development of these competencies.

Some areas of concern in the Finn Report are already being addressed in the State. These include:

- an increase in retention to year 12 above the national average;
- increasing integration with the Department of Employment and Technical and Further Education (DETAFE) and cross-accreditation of courses;
- compulsory Australian studies as a component of SACE;
- a commitment to improved integration of careers education.

Post-compulsory and higher education

During 1991 SSABSA and the SACE team (a cooperative venture between the Education Department of South Australia, Catholic Education and the Independent Schools Board) worked with the school community of administrators, teachers, students, and parents to prepare for the first year of the certificate in 1992.

Another aspect of SACE preparation concentrated on the requirements of the Writing Based Literacy Assessment (WBLA). This is an across-the-curriculum assessment of written pieces of work completed by students in the normal course of their study for SACE. Students must successfully satisfy the WBLA as well as the SACE curriculum pattern to gain a certificate. Each school program therefore has to provide an opportunity for students to produce pieces of writing that can go into their WBLA folios.

Other areas of change in post-compulsory schooling include the type and number of year 12 subjects required for admission into institutions of higher education and the development of senior schools to accommodate the increasing number of adult students.

A current concern is that the number of offers of tertiary places made by the South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre to students from all schools in South Australia decreased. This suggests that the pressure on students seeking a university place is increasing and will have a continuing effect on apparent year 12 retention rates.

Initiatives in career education

The Job and Course Explorer computerised database, with occupational, course and training information, was used to advise students. A regularly updated pamphlet entitled *Youth Labour Market Issues*, a joint Education Department and DETAFE publication, aimed to provide relevant employment and labour market information. The pamphlet is now also in intensive use in Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia.

The Unlock Your Future Program, a joint Education Department, DETAFE, DEET and SSABSA project, provided comprehensive information about year 12 subjects, careers and related areas. A vacation counselling service was also helpful to students choosing courses.

A trial program, Broadening Life Options, introduced careers and work issues to primary students. Students also have the opportunity to visit business and industrial sites for a practical insight into possible careers. In addition, information about industrial relations and occupational health and safety is made available through the School, Education and World of Work Project.

Catholic schools

Catholic education continues to support a holistic view of education within the context of partnership with parents, in union with Christ's saving mission and school communities, for participation in the Church and world communities today.

Catholic education supports development of generic skills and competencies and has worked closely with State and independent school authorities in assisting to generate responses to the work of the Mayer Committee.

During 1991 schools prepared for the introduction of SACE in collaboration with other sectors.

Catholic Education has provided representation on Pathways project groups to improve links between school and DETAFE, especially in the areas of tourism and hospitality, engineering and business, with cross-credit arrangements expanding.

Work education programs are expanding, as are work-experience programs in Catholic schools. Some 15 Catholic secondary schools use the Job and Course Explorer and the sector has representation on the Work-Education Advisory Committee.

The very high student retention rate in Catholic schools to year 12 results in a majority of students applying for entry to tertiary institutions. Efforts are being made to increase the profile of TAFE training courses as an appropriate and desirable option for more students. This is requiring an attitudinal shift, as the tendency has been to move from schools to higher education or directly into employment.

Independent schools

Finn Report

Resource implications for independent schools in the light of current trends for post-compulsory education are substantial. There will be a need for additional staff, staff development and capital facilities to meet recommendations for the identified six key areas of competence. The structural changes (physical, managerial and pastoral) required for post-compulsory schooling as they are proposed in the Finn Report will be significant for the individual independent school.

Established joint arrangements with other schools and other school sectors for the provision of appropriate curriculum and physical resources may need to be extended and refined. In meeting these requirements, the individual school will seek to maintain its fundamental independence/uniqueness and at the same time offer a competitive range of choices and pathway options for its students.

Links with TAFE, career and higher education

During 1991 independent schools continued to cooperate in the development of new higher education entry requirements through representation on the Higher Education Entry Coordinating Committee. Continuing negotiations for extending the transfer of credit arrangements and cross-accreditation between DETAFE and schools through SSABSA occurred with independent school involvement. The Education Department, through the Australian Institute of Export, extended its program of visiting business and industry sites to independent schools in 1991, giving students the opportunity to visit business and industry. Work experience programs continued successfully under the revised 1990 guidelines in most secondary schools with year 10 students. Career education was further supplemented with schools' involvement in the Unlock Your Future Project.

Areas of student learning

Government schools

Levels of attainment in reception to year 10

During 1990 the Education Department developed levels of attainment indicators based upon the required areas of study as outlined in *Educating for the 21st Century*. The required areas of study are: English, languages other than English, mathematics, science, society and environment, health and personal development, the arts and technology.

In 1991 attainment-levels materials were developed for all areas of study. These include 'attainment statements' and 'observable outcomes' to describe what it is that students attending government schools should know, be able to do and understand at each of six levels as they progress from reception to year 10.

English

English is a required area of study from reception to year 11 (soon to become the South Australian Certificate of Education, SACE, stage 1). Students practise and refine their language use and develop their awareness of how language works in a variety of contexts. They learn and work independently or as members of a group. It is intended that they experience a broad range of opportunities to read, write, speak and listen for a wide range of purposes and audiences.

Teachers are recognising the influence of social context in learning and the importance of appropriate text selection. They are encouraged to negotiate aspects of the curriculum through providing a degree of choice in course content and methodology, and to consider the preferred learning styles of specific groups of students, particularly those from educationally disadvantaged groups.

The definition of text has broadened, with a greater range of non-traditional texts, e.g. visual texts, being introduced into some English classrooms. Teachers at all levels are being challenged by the idea that there are many possible readings of any text and that it is possible to investigate and consider the consequences of different readings. With their students they are exploring the intricacies of the relationships between texts, contexts, readers, authors and meanings. The development of students' competence in oral language is also emphasised.

The Writing and Reading Assessment Program (WRAP), 1989–91, has provided challenging information on literacy learning outcomes for the student population as a whole and for particular student groups. Issues arising for English concern the gap between the curriculum guidelines and classroom practice. WRAP has raised questions about the balance of the English curriculum, the purposes for which reading and writing occur and the need to create opportunities for students to develop competence in a range of written forms. The results suggest that much of the focus of English classrooms has been on basic skills in written language use at the expense of higher order thinking skills, and that the range of texts actually in use in classrooms is limited.

There are two interrelated focuses in training and development. The Literacy and Learning in the Middle Years (LLIMY) and ESL in the mainstream in-service courses have had particular impact on both primary and secondary teachers' methodologies, not only in English but across the curriculum. The Assessment of Writing and Reading Inservice Teacher Education (AWRITE) Program has developed assessment tools to assist teachers in identifying and articulating student strengths and weaknesses in reading and writing.

Programs such as the Literacy and Learning Program (1991) have been established to develop strategies which address the needs of students who traditionally experience educational disadvantage. In addition, under the Commonwealth Literacy and Learning Program, professional development programs and support materials were developed and trialled. These were based on case studies of literacy demands in areas such as mathematics, science and technology and involved 59 government and Catholic schools which have a high proportion of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Mathematics

The Primary Mathematics Project (1988–91) established some 30 focus schools across the State. Focus schools provided in-service and curriculum guidance to over 200 schools. In recognition of the need to revitalise the teaching of mathematics in the junior secondary years, the Junior Secondary Mathematics Resource Schools Project was established in 1991. Six schools have been provided with funds and personnel to develop model programs, practices and development strategies. In addition, each of the schools has begun to research and develop strategies which address the needs of a specific educationally disadvantaged group.

During 1991 the *National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools* was distributed and the newly developed attainment levels in mathematics for students in reception to year 10 were released.

The existing *R–10 Mathematics Curriculum Guidelines* have been complemented at year 12 level with applied and business-oriented courses involving the use of relevant applications.

The need to promote literacy and numeracy as essential cross-curricular learnings for students has resulted in the appointment of 'key directions advisers' in numeracy and literacy for each Teacher and Student Support Centre created in the restructured Education Department.

Particular projects continued the process of identifying and meeting the needs of special populations. As the body of knowledge about effective inclusive practice continues to grow, mathematics curriculum and documentation reflect and incorporate this understanding.

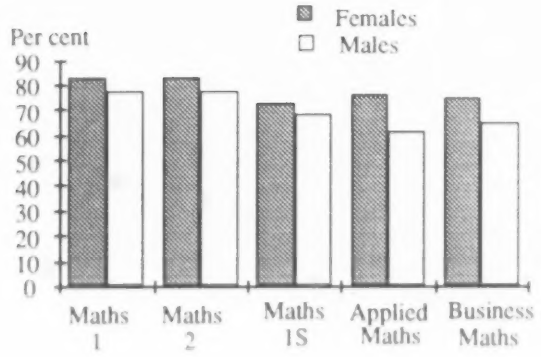
For example, in 1990–91 an action research project investigated the participation in mathematics of junior primary and primary girls and documented strategies to address the issues identified and promote more active participation of girls in learning mathematics.

There is a need to broaden the options of students, particularly girls, who wish to proceed to higher education but would like to study mathematical subjects more in tune with their interests and future needs than are the current offerings. The inclusion, from 1993, of statistics-based

courses among the group of higher education selection subjects will do much to assist here.

Statistics kept by the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia indicate that, though girls are outnumbered by boys in mathematical subjects (especially in the intensive Maths 1 and 2 courses), they perform well. Student outcomes in mathematics subjects in year 12 in 1991 are illustrated in Figure 5. The percentage of female students gaining the three highest grades (A, B or C) exceeded the percentage of males in all full-year courses.

Figure 5. Percentage of SA students (government and non-government) obtaining A, B or C grades in mathematics subjects, year 12, 1991



Source: SSABSA

Languages other than English (LOTE)

The Education Department's Language Policy is to provide, by 1995, opportunities for all junior primary and primary students to learn at least one language other than English as part of their formal education. In addition, all secondary students will have access to the study of at least one language other than English. Accordingly, 41,000 students in primary schools and 21,000 students in secondary schools studied a language other than English in 1991.

Other 1991 initiatives include the following:

- In line with national directions, 14 languages have been identified for wider teaching in mainstream schools. These languages are Chinese, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Pitjantjatjara, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese.
- Release-time scholarships for upgrading LOTE teachers' language proficiency and retraining teachers in Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Spanish have been a priority in 1991. Seven scholarship holders successfully completed their studies.
- With special funding from the Australian Second Language Learning Program, bilingual programs in Vietnamese–English, Italian–English and German–English have been established at three primary schools.
- Curriculum frameworks and resources were developed in German, Greek, Khmer, Indonesian and Vietnamese during 1991.

Science

The primary Science and Technology Project (SciTec) completed its initial three-year program, which involved more than 200 schools through 30 focus schools. An Education Review Unit review of SciTec was completed and published and will inform the future development of the SciTec Program.

Nearly 100 teachers gained new skills through the Physics Development Program. This program increased the use of computer and interfacing technology in science and developed support materials for the SACE Physics Program.

Preparations are well advanced for the establishment of a Science School of the Future at Science Park.

In 1991 South Australia hosted the junior Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science Conference for 200 secondary students.

Technology

Studies in technology provide students with opportunities to apply the processes of designing, making and appraising to materials, information and systems. The subject areas of agricultural education, business education, computing studies, home economics, media studies and technology studies contribute to the development of these skills.

A major State issue which is being addressed with some creativity is the high cost of providing the necessary, up-to-date equipment and teacher training for these activities. Strategies include the joint purchase and sharing of equipment between schools, industry sponsorship, development of focus schools, teachers as 'interns' and the use of specialist support centres.

During 1991 training of teachers for the Engineering Careers Pathways Project began and will lead to students gaining accreditation for introductory modules in a variety of post-school training courses.

Society and environment

One of Aldgate Primary School's environment protection schemes

Much of the activity in this area of study in 1991 was characterised by the preparation of curriculum documents and the training and development of teachers to support them. Documents included:

- *Common Knowledge*;
- *Environment: A Handbook for Teachers*;
- *Green Strategy for Schools*;
- *Introductory Keyboarding R–12*;
- *Year 10 Business Awareness*;
- *Financial Guidelines for Conducting the Small Business Management Course*.

Considerable training and development support occurred for Australian studies, the new and compulsory semester course for stage 1 of SACE.

Health

During 1991 curriculum officers and school communities worked together to develop attainment-level statements for reception to year 10 students for health and personal development. These statements constitute a description of student learning in this area throughout the years of compulsory schooling.

In 1991 two significant projects, the State Teacher Education and Community Health (TEACH) Project, and the national School Development in Health Education (SDHE) Project, were in their final year. TEACH, funded through the Social Justice Strategy of the South Australian Government, responded to the evidence that health status is a major indicator of disadvantage. TEACH used the national SDHE model of social and educational change as a framework for its professional development programs. This proved to be a very successful State–Federal partnership.

The SDHE project also coordinated Health in Schools, a collaborative policy development to support the provision of health education, health care and health promotion in and through school communities.

The Education Department of South Australia and the Ministry of Education of Western Australia successfully tendered to prepare the design brief for the national collaborative health area statement and profile.

The arts

Several curriculum documents were completed, including those dealing with new communication technologies in media studies programs, the world of work in the arts, secondary level dance, primary level drama and the teaching of instrumental music. Extensive preparation was made for the introduction of the SACE in which senior secondary students will have an opportunity to study in the 'Arts Broad Field', an identified group of subjects which will include art, craft, design, technical drawing, dance, drama and music.

The special interest music centres undertook a review of their work and developed a draft charter for their future directions.

Programs were commenced to guide schools in reviewing, planning and managing the complexity of arts programming and the provision of equal access to each of the arts areas of study at all levels of schooling.

Programs involving students and teachers in the use of new technologies were mounted in the areas of music, drama, design and the visual arts.

Primary music

Catholic schools

Curriculum in South Australian Catholic schools operates within a religious context, is consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church and accords with the policy *Vision for Catholic Schools* which emphasises lifelong, holistic, independent and responsible learning, involvement in the Church's mission as a member of a Christian community and development of relationships through recognising the unique presence of God in all people.

Each Catholic school is responsible for curriculum and professional development planning, implementation and review. Generally, schools have adopted a curriculum framework which covers religious education, English, languages other than English, health (including personal development and physical education), mathematics, science, society and environment, the arts and technology.

Schools are formally reviewed on a regular basis by government agencies and the Catholic Education Office. One of these review programs is the principal's five-yearly assessment. These reviews include consideration of the areas of student learning to ensure that proper planning and development are occurring and to monitor balance of treatment within the overall curriculum framework.

There is a high level of cooperation between government, Catholic and independent school authorities in the implementation of curriculum and professional development in a number of the areas of learning, especially Aboriginal education, SACE, and language and literacy programs.

Support for curriculum and professional development is provided through advisory teachers, joint system projects and in-service courses in religious education (including values and moral development), English, LOTE, society and environment, the arts (particularly music), health (including personal development and physical education) and whole-school planning and development.

English

In the area of English language and literacy two important joint systems projects induced significant growth in teacher understanding, knowledge and skill. The LLIMY Project is a professional development project having a strong impact on classroom practices related to reading and writing. WRAP is providing the basis for better literacy teaching and assessment in the future. The LOTE Program in Catholic schools has also made a significant impact on literacy learning. These projects have serious implications for teaching across all areas of student learning.

Mathematics

A Mathematics Study Group has been established to look at the implications of the *National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools* and the support which may be required for teachers in reviewing mathematics teaching and learning in schools.

LOTE

The South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) launched its LOTE policy statement and put into effect a seven-year implementation plan to support primary schools in introducing or developing LOTE programs. The policy encourages programs in a number of different languages appropriate to local school communities, and a variety of modes of delivery including distance and bilingual modes.

SACE

Preparation for the introduction and implementation of SACE has generated structures of support for curriculum development and review. This preparation has led schools to reflect on the education being offered at the junior secondary as well as senior secondary levels.

A working party has been established to monitor the SACE literacy requirements, with particular reference to adaptive education and with a view to identifying support strategies for teachers.

Independent schools

English

Initiatives in the area of English have primarily centred around:

- LLIMY for primary level students;
- Literacy Across the Curriculum, a training and development program to assist junior secondary students use the language of major subject disciplines more effectively by strengthening the skills of teaching staff;
- the development of the Writing Based Literacy Assessment (WBLA) component for SACE stage 1 students.

An evaluation of LLIMY was commissioned in 1991 and the report is awaited. It is anticipated that the methodology will be used at the junior secondary level from 1992. This is most likely to occur in independent schools of R–12 structure who have been using the LLIMY approach in their primary levels.

Assessment of literacy levels in independent schools has been conducted on a cooperative, inter-sector basis within the Writing and Reading Assessment Program.

Mathematics

A joint project with the University of South Australia was undertaken in 1991 to develop new methodologies in the teaching of primary mathematics. The first in-service developments for teachers will commence in 1992. The project will focus on teaching and learning of mathematics, good classroom practice, developing personal mathematical knowledge and working with adults, e.g. colleagues and parents.

LOTE

The continuation of Australian Second Language Learning Program funding and the increased emphasis on the teaching of languages over the past four years has led to nearly all schools having a newly established, extended or additional LOTE program in their curriculum. Secondary language teachers were assisted in their understanding and

application of the Australian Language Levels guidelines and SACE guidelines through in-service development sessions. Six independent school teachers undertook the Language Inservice Program for Teachers and were exposed to the theory and practice of language teaching, to the benefit of some 1,130 students in seven schools.

Technology

The expense of equipment required to offer effective technology studies courses which have now moved past the simple introduction of computers to areas of computer-aided design, art, science and technical studies has limited the number of schools venturing into this field. The Technology School of the Future at Technology Park provides one alternative focus for independent school students to visit and experience hands-on state-of-the-art technology with students from other sectors.

Teaching and learning

Government schools

Recruitment

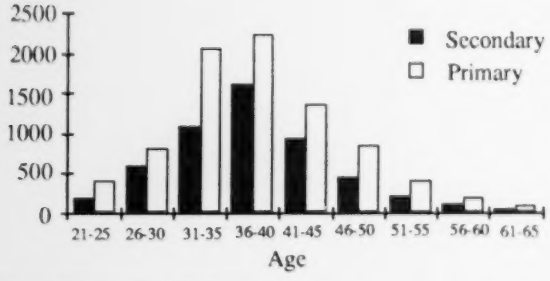
The teacher recruitment process is based on merit, its objective being to identify the best applicants to undertake positions in South Australian schools.

Given the age profile of the workforce, together with a predicted increase in student numbers by the end of the decade, supply and demand of appropriately qualified teachers is a significant issue.

The department has recently published a series of brochures targeting areas of predicted subject shortage. These brochures are particularly designed for senior secondary students who are considering teaching as a career option.

The Education Department is further involved in promoting educational debate and liaison between the tertiary institutions to ensure a supply of qualified graduates to address recruitment needs of the twenty-first century.

Figure 6. Age profile of teachers in SA schools, 1991



Source: SA Department of Education

Selection

Selection for all leadership positions is based on merit. A range of techniques is available to ensure the effective and efficient selection of staff. Principals consult with staff and refer to other sources of advice such as their school personnel advisory committees to agree on procedures to be used by panels for filling vacancies. These procedures should be consistent with the policies of schools involved, the nature and circumstances of positions and equal opportunity principles and practices. In addition, general guidelines for selection of staff for all leadership positions have been published and are available to all applicants.

Teaching contexts and use of technology

Trials have been held in the use of fully interactive, two-way microwave television between clusters of schools in metropolitan and country areas. This technology enables a teacher in one location to be seen by, and to see, students in another location in a distance-education learning mode.

Other technological developments include:

- expansion in the use of teleconference bridges to link voice communication of a teacher and groups of students in several locations;
- some use of laser video and CD-ROM disks to enable student access to large amounts of information;
- investigation of multimedia techniques which provide valuable learning and motivational tools for students;
- investigation of interactive computing which allows the monitoring of a student's work at a computer by a teacher at another location.

The department's central fax network, which links all schools in the State from Adelaide, now includes an interactive fax by which a user in a remote location can use the central network to send information to other remote locations.

Teachers and teaching

Throughout 1991 negotiations continued with the South Australian Institute of Teachers on the introduction of Advanced Skills Teachers. Appointment as an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) will be based on outstanding classroom expertise. In addition ASTs will be expected to improve the productivity and efficiency of classrooms through their contribution to improving the teaching programs of other teachers.

Other local industrial initiatives have focused on issues associated with award restructuring. These include a new principal classification, restructuring of the school assistant award, an extensive review of part-time employment, and negotiations towards a more flexible approach to the 'mix and match' of staff allocated to a school. There has

been further refinement of the selection of staff for all leadership positions.

As a result of these major structural reforms there has been a significant increase in productivity. Furthermore, the structural reforms have resulted in a more informed workforce and more rewarding tasks for employees.

The developments in the industrial area, while unique to South Australia, reflect the system's commitment to a nationally consistent approach to a salaries and conditions package for teachers. Significant progress has been made toward consistency across the nation in terms of the salary component of the package. Progress has been slower on the conditions component.

Catholic schools

Teaching and learning in Catholic schools operate in a religious context, are consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church and are based on four main principles:

- education of young people in all dimensions of life;
- an invitation to join the Church's mission;
- a welcome to students to a Christian learning community;
- preparation for life.

Catholic schools provide opportunities for teacher educational leadership through in-service, leadership courses and professional development.

During 1991 SACCS developed policy covering the management of student behaviour in Catholic schools. The policy is a response to the changing attitudes of society towards education and discipline. It acknowledges that ever-increasing pressures and demands are placed on schools and it supports and strengthens the many good practices which are occurring in Catholic schools.

The policy is framed within the SACCS policy statement *A Vision for South Australia: Catholic Schools*. It is based on the premise that 'Catholic schools aim to empower students so that they take responsibility for their own actions'.

Independent schools

Teacher recruitment is a fundamental requisite of each independent school. As the employing body, each school seeks to identify and recruit the best applicants for the positions available. In recent times positions have in the main been limited to schools catering for increasing enrolments and/or expanding curriculum.

Most of independent schools operate within a Christian framework. Selection procedures are consistent with a school's philosophy and appropriate to the nature and circumstances of the position. Many schools aim to have a good mix of teaching experience on staff and have done so by employing recent graduates as well as experienced teachers.

Advanced Skills Teacher negotiations with the Association of Non-government Education Employees (ANGEE) and the South Australian Institute of Teachers have moved towards establishing appropriate criteria for AST appointments. The increased cost of award restructuring has had a significant impact on independent schools' budgets and fee increases have resulted. In meeting these costs schools continue to recognise the important role of teachers within the South Australian community.

Resourcing schools

The total number of students in South Australian schools in 1991 was 246,833 (compared with 242,735 in 1990) with an increase in the primary sector: 156,064 in 1991 (compared with 151,669 in 1990). Total non-government school enrolments increased, with growth occurring in both the primary and secondary levels.

Table 1. Full-time students in SA schools, 1991

School type	*Govt*	*Non-govt*	*Catholic*	*Total*
Primary	122,139	12,698	21,227	156,064
Secondary	64,675	12,035	14,059	90,769
Total	**186,814**	**24,733**	**35,286**	**246,833**

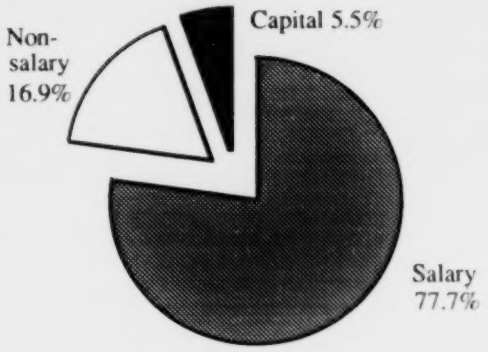
Source: ABS

Government schools

After an extended period of enrolment decline to a low in 1990, enrolment in government schools increased in 1991 and is expected to continue this upward trend. There was again rapid enrolment growth in the outer northern and outer southern suburbs. Some rationalisation of schools occurred in areas of declining student population.

Recurrent expenditure of the Education Department in government schools during the 1990–91 financial year was $940.6 million compared with $861.1 million in the previous financial year, an increase of $79.5 million. (These figures include on costs such as payroll tax and superannuation not in AEC NSSC totals.)

Figure 7. Expenditure SA government schools, 1990–91



Source: SA Education Department

Capital expenditure was $54.5 million compared with $54.4 million in the previous financial year.

Significant features are listed below:

- Salary, wages and related payments represent 82.2 per cent of total recurrent education payments in government schools.
- Full-time enrolments in government schools increased from 184,868 in 1990 to 186,814 in 1991.
- Total education spending as a percentage of state outlays in 1990–91 was 24.7 per cent (includes government spending on government and non-government schools).
- Standardised per capita expenditure on government primary education was $4,036, and on secondary education $5,791, giving an overall per student expenditure of $4,650. (See notes in Table 19 of *Statistical Annex*. The actual cost per student is higher than these standardised figures.)

Entrepreneurial initiatives during 1991 included:

- expansion of the Overseas Full Fee Paying Student Program from 54 students in 1990 to 77 in 1991;
- income from the Materials Development and Technology Services of approximately $1 million;
- planning of materials and courses marketing across Australia by the Open Access College;
- prudent and cooperative investment of income and grant funds within schools and groups of schools, which maximised their interest return;
- subsidy from industry, particularly in the form of equipment, for specific projects.

Catholic schools

In 1991 there was an increase in the number of students in Catholic schools.

The 105 schools are resourced by way of private income (fees, levies, fundraising) together with State and Commonwealth funds. The funds generated have to provide for the recurrent and capital needs of the schools. Each school has a deliberative school board which maintains an effective partnership between the board (as manager of the school), and parents' committees and the principal and staff.

SACCS has general overview of recurrent and capital resources which are distributed according to priorities and objectives set by government. The funding arrangements have not been able to keep pace with increased costs of delivering education and there has been a rise in the ratio of pupils to teachers.

The continued development of new urban areas together with changed statutory building requirements have significantly increased the demands for capital funds.

Independent schools

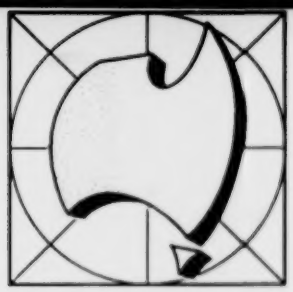
Private fee income and State and Commonwealth government grants contribute to school resources. The management of these resources is entirely school-based, and funds are used to maximise opportunities for students to receive the best education a school can offer.

Recurrent grants to schools vary according to particular levels of resource requirement as measured by the State and Commonwealth governments. Like Catholic schools, independent schools are struggling to maintain the teacher–pupil ratios of previous years in an economic climate characterised by increasing costs and reducing income.

Capital resources are largely provided through the supportive efforts of individual school communities. As for Catholic schools, there is an ongoing need for capital funds to meet both the costs of refurbishing old facilities as curriculum requirements change and the demand for new facilities in new residential areas. Commonwealth capital grants help some schools towards meeting these costs.

Junior primary archaeology project

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Objectives and priorities for schooling

The priorities outlined below indicate a continuing focus on particular curriculum areas such as literacy and increasing attention to achieving excellence in Western Australian government and non-government schools in 1991. Community participation and professional development of teachers remain important priorities. In the government school system a significant change from previous years involved distinctions being drawn between educational priorities and priorities for providing support for schools in keeping with the commitment to devolution of decision-making responsibility to the school level.

Priorities for government schools

The Ministry of Education strives for excellence in learning and teaching, and is committed to maximising the educational achievement of all students. Within this context, a number of priorities for development in Western Australian schools were identified for 1991 and were reflected in both resource allocation and school development planning.

Priorities in schools in 1991 were:

- literacy and numeracy;
- post-compulsory schooling;
- Aboriginal education;
- social justice.

Priorities for support to schools in 1991 were:

- professional development and training;
- review of the best means and structures for providing support to self-determining schools;
- identification of understandings, skills and attitudes appropriate to each curriculum area;
- definition of a 'curriculum assurance' for students;
- development of strategies and materials to support LOTE.

Priorities in system coordination and development in 1991 were:

- continuation of devolution;
- school renewal in some parts of the State;
- quality assurance;
- integration of planning across the ministry.

Priorities for Catholic schools

Catholic schools in Western Australia provide education within a Catholic context and are committed to the development of the whole person: each student's uniqueness and giftedness is appreciated and developed within Gospel values. In 1991, the major priority objectives for Catholic schools were:

- professional development of teachers;
- development of a comprehensive curriculum that caters for all students;
- values education;
- community participation in Catholic education, particularly by parents;
- provision of Catholic education for students disadvantaged by ethnicity, isolation or physical/intellectual disabilities;
- provision of increased opportunities for Aboriginal students.

Priorities for independent schools

The priorities reported by independent schools were:

- ensuring excellence in education by developing all students' talents and capacities to the full;
- maximising the confidence and competence of teachers;
- emphasising the physical development and personal health and fitness of students;
- developing students' skills and knowledge in specified subject areas such as creative arts, science and technology and English literacy;
- developing better links with the school community.

Priorities related to national goals of schooling

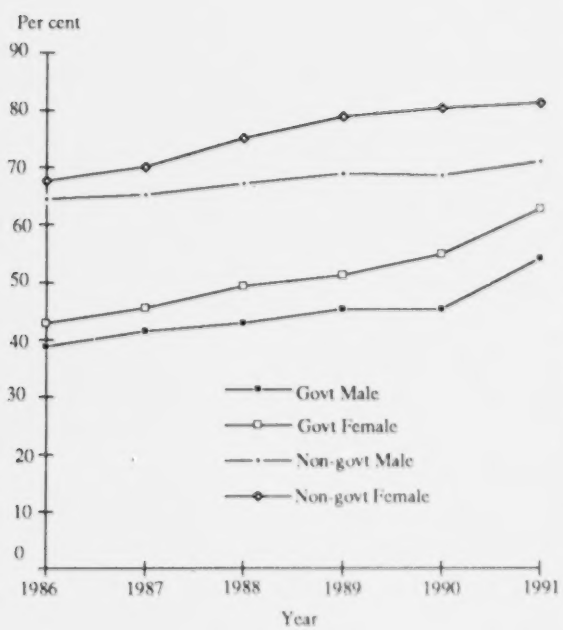
Although developed separately, the priorities identified by Western Australian schools demonstrate close connections with the national goals of schooling. The priorities indicate a developing focus on excellence for all students, regardless of their talent or ability. They show an evolving awareness of the centrality of improved student outcomes in priority setting and a realisation that priorities must in some way contribute to such improvements. In this latter respect, the priorities assigned to the professional development of teachers and community participation in schooling are prominent examples.

Excellence and equity

Retention

More students are staying at school longer in Western Australia. The year 12 retention rate in government schools rose significantly in 1991. Non-government schools showed a steady rise, and the higher retention rate for girls continued. In 1991 the overall apparent retention rate to year 12 was 58.3 per cent in government schools and 76 per cent in non-government schools.

Figure 1. Apparent year 8 to year 12 retention rates by school sector, by sex, Western Australia, selected years



Source: WA Ministry of Education

The retention rate of Aboriginal students continued to increase steadily across secondary education. In 1991 there were 143 Aboriginal students in year 12. While this corresponds to a still low retention rate of 18 per cent, it represents an increase of some 196 per cent in enrolments over the five-year period from 1986 and an increase of 47 students from the previous year. Around 53.6 per cent of the 1990 year 11 Aboriginal students proceeded to year 12 in 1991.

Participation

As Table 1 shows, 328,353 students attended school in Western Australia in 1991. This represented an increase of 5,795, or 1.8 per cent over the previous year. Approximately 60 per cent of this was in government schools, representing a growth of 1.5 per cent, compared with 3 per cent in non-government schools.

Table 1. Full-time (a) students by level, Western Australia, August 1991

Government schools	
Primary schools	153,200
District high schools	17,578
Secondary schools	71,622
Education support schools/centres	2,048
Distance education centres	674
Total	*245,122*
Non-government schools	
Primary schools	31,648
Primary-secondary combined	25,949
Secondary schools	18,263
Total	*75,860*
Community preschools	*6,167*
Independent preschools	*1,204*
Total all schools	**328,353**

(a) Not applicable to pre-primary students, who attend on a sessional basis

Source: WA Ministry of Education

Effective schools

The management of the Western Australian government school system continued according to the plan set out in the report *Better Schools in Western Australia: A Programme for Improvement* (1987). Further progress in implementing appropriate planning, monitoring and decision-making processes occurred during 1991.

The document *School Accountability: Policy and Guidelines* was published and distributed, providing schools with a complete set of policies covering school development planning, school decision making, school financial planning and school accountability. Changes to the *Education Act* and the Education Act Regulations were effected, requiring the establishment of decision-making groups in all schools and providing parameters for their operation, including the election of members. The process associated with these structures has two fundamental purposes: firstly, to establish that all schools are responsible for improving student outcomes, and secondly, to provide schools with flexibility in how they use resources to achieve improvements. This supports the overall rationale of the devolution strategy, which is that decisions most likely to improve student outcomes are those made at the school level.

Quality of schooling

As more decision-making responsibility is devolved to the local school level it has become more important to be able to monitor effectively the quality of schooling being provided. For government schools, recent developments have allowed more efficient system-level monitoring of the quality of schooling. Data are now available which provide more detailed understandings of student subject participation and attainment at several different year levels. Some examples of the data now available are:

- year 12 performance: secondary graduation rate;
- year 10 performance: unit curriculum level;
- year 10 performance: unit curriculum breadth of study;
- year 10 performance: unit curriculum depth of study.

In addition, the school development planning process requires close involvement by district superintendents in monitoring each school's attainments as well as its development planning. Initiatives relevant to improving the quality of school staffing also have had an impact on the quality of schooling, as have other initiatives concerned with resourcing schools. These are reported in more detail later.

Developments which continued in 1991 provided for greater parent and community participation in schooling. Regulations relating to the establishment of school decision-making groups were prepared and will provide parents and community members with the means to participate directly in reviewing school performance, setting priorities and allocating resources. This experience will provide local communities with better understandings of how schools work and of their achievements.

Social justice

During 1991, the Western Australian Ministry of Education released a major policy initiative entitled Social Justice in Education. This was accompanied by detailed guidelines for gender equity and the education of students from non-English speaking backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds

The policy and guidelines for the education of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds were being developed in 1991 for incorporation into the Social Justice in Education policy file.

The ministry commenced two major initiatives which focused on schools serving students from low socioeconomic backgrounds: the First Steps and Stepping Out projects, which are described in greater detail later in the section on teaching contexts.

The Commonwealth-funded Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) continued to assist those schools serving communities with the greatest degree and concentration of socioeconomic disadvantage by providing resources to be used to increase educational opportunities for these students. DSP assistance, which operates as the Priority Schools Program (PSP) in government schools, was received by 135 schools (up from 90 in 1990) and included the provision of additional support staff and resources.

The Western Australian Non-Government Disadvantaged Schools Program, which was administered by the Catholic Education Office, provided assistance to schools in the form of additional support staff and resources to broaden the educational opportunities for students in communities experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage.

Students with disabilities

The Ministry of Education aims to place all students with disabilities in the most appropriate settings and as close to their homes as possible. Different levels of support are available ranging from education support schools for students with severe and/or multiple disabilities, education support centres located on sites of regular primary and secondary schools, units (classes) in regular schools and visiting teacher support for students in regular schools.

In 1991 a total of 60 education support schools and centres catered for 2,048 students at the following levels: pre-primary 165; primary 1,308 and secondary 575. A further 1,300 students with intellectual disabilities attended education support units attached to regular schools.

All students with physical or sensory disabilities and all preschool-aged students with disabilities attended their local schools. Students with intellectual disabilities usually attended education support facilities.

During 1990–91 an increasing number of students with disabilities sought educational placement in remote schools, small country schools and district high schools. Much of the Students with Severe Disabilities element within the Commonwealth Special Education Program funding was used to support these students.

Students' learnings in life skills are encouraged

Six post-compulsory education support classes were formed. Extra resources were put into schools and education support centres to staff and equip the classes, which were located in the metropolitan area. In addition, part-time staff were placed in country areas to assist schools to meet the needs of the smaller numbers of students of post-compulsory age who have disabilities.

In 1991, 952 children with disabilities ranging from mild to severe were enrolled in Catholic schools. These children were integrated into regular mainstream primary and secondary classes or located in support units with specialist teaching staff within those schools which provided opportunities for integration.

Geographically isolated students

The Distance Education Centre (DEC) continued to provide for those students who were unable to access education in mainstream schools. In 1991, 654 full-time students were enrolled in the DEC: 30 pre-primary, 335 primary and 289 secondary. This did not include 437 secondary students using DEC materials in government and non-government schools. The Ministry of Education also operates five Schools of the Air which provide pre-primary and primary education to students living in isolated areas. In 1991, 252 students were enrolled at the Schools of the Air.

In 1991 a State conference of representatives from the Priority Country Areas Program (PCAP)—the name by which the Commonwealth-funded Disadvantaged Country Areas Program is known in Western Australia—considered issues in the education of geographically isolated students and decided on the following as priorities:

- increased support for the delivery of education to remote areas through technology;
- a more equitable distribution of program funds to address the needs of secondary students in specific curriculum areas (such as LOTE) or specific levels of education such as post-compulsory education;
- promotion of community participation in the program.

The Schools of the Air allocated part of their PCAP funding to trial the use of telematics to deliver education to those of their primary school students in the most remote locations. This initiative is described in more detail in the section on teaching contexts on page 111.

Academically talented students

A variety of provisions exist for students who are academically talented, ranging from extension in regular classrooms to special placement programs.

At the primary level, the Primary Extension and Challenge (PEAC) Program supplements mainstream school provisions for students in years 4 to 7. PEAC centres operate at district level and are usually attached to one of the schools in a district. PEAC provisions are now available in all 29 districts.

At the secondary level, Secondary Special Placement Provision (SSPP) programs are offered to talented students in art, dance, languages other than English, music and theatre arts. In addition, ten senior high schools offer special placement for academically talented students. Also at the secondary level, a Secondary Extension and Challenge (SEAC) Program operates between some schools which have formed clusters to offer a range of extension courses.

Provisions in this area are now devolved and extensive networking is being undertaken.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB)

The Ministry of Education has three levels of provision for students for whom English is a second language: intensive language centres for new arrivals, support programs implemented by specialist teachers, and advisory support for teachers of mainstream classes. Funding is provided through the Commonwealth's English as a Second Language (ESL) Program.

In 1991 key initiatives were:

- the launching of the *Policy and Guidelines for the Education of Non-English Speaking Background Students* as part of the Social Justice in Education policy;
- involvement in the national review of ESL;

- the establishment of a bilingual project in Khmer and English in a metropolitan primary school;
- the preparation of student outcome statements by ESL officers. Schools with ESL programs will participate in trialling the use of these statements.

In Catholic schools, ESL teachers received support through a series of seminars, small-group sessions and network meetings and visits to individuals by the ESL consultant. In 1991 particular emphasis was placed on assessment and accompanying procedures and on the Commonwealth's National Project on Student Profiles (ESL).

Aboriginal students

In 1991 Aboriginal education was given particular emphasis by the Ministry of Education through the continuation of the 1990–92 Aboriginal Education Operational plan. The plan acted as a focus for projects across the ministry with the single purpose of improving educational equity for Aboriginal students.

Initiatives which became fully operational in 1991 contributed to the rising Aboriginal student retention rate and included the Aboriginal Studies Program, which is now being implemented in schools across the State; the introduction of Aboriginal language teaching in government schools; and the increased employment of Aboriginal people at all levels of the ministry. In addition, teachers were able to access specific professional development activities aimed at enhancing their awareness of Aboriginal students' cultural and educational needs. These activities ranged from Statewide initiatives, such as the literacy-based First Steps Program to district-specific induction and cultural awareness projects. The ministry's process of devolution also enabled schools to use resources to target specific needs of Aboriginal students.

First Steps Program at Kununurra District High School

In 1991 the government school system employed 22 Aboriginal Liaison Officers and 267 Aboriginal Education Workers (an increase of 24 per cent over 1990). In addition to these staff, 16 Aboriginal people were working in management/administration and 32 trained Aboriginal teachers were employed. In order to increase the number of Aboriginal people working in the ministry, an employment and training strategy was being developed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit.

In addition to these initiatives, the establishment of Aboriginal parent groups was encouraged strongly in government schools, with a total of 188 being formed during 1991 under the auspices of the Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness (ASSPA) Program. These groups are considered integral to the process of increasing Aboriginal participation in educational decision making.

The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia also has a strong commitment to the support and retention of Aboriginal students at all levels. Catholic schools provided non-Aboriginal students with study courses to engender a greater appreciation of Aboriginal people, their history and their culture. During 1991 school administrators, teaching staff and parent groups were given deeper understandings of this commitment.

Induction courses were provided for non-Aboriginal staff who were new to Aboriginal education, a teaching assistants' seminar was held and support was provided for para-professional staff undertaking courses of study. In addition, the Catholic Education Commission has cooperated with several other agencies to establish the Teacher Training Program for Aboriginal People in the Kimberley area.

Other non-government schools in Western Australia highlighted the goal of developing in primary and junior secondary Aboriginal students the skills of English literacy and numeracy. Schools adopted such strategies as enlisting parent assistance in the classroom; conducting diagnostic and attainment testing; employing teacher-linguists to train teachers to produce appropriate reading materials; providing intensive classes; and reviewing curriculum for relevance and realism.

The Commonwealth Students at Risk Program continued to support 16 secondary schools in seven education districts with the lowest retention rates, with the aim of improving student participation and retention by resourcing school-based initiatives supporting those students most at risk of failing to complete their secondary schooling.

Educational provision for girls

The release of the Ministry of Education's *Policy and Guidelines for Gender Equity* as part of the Social Justice Policy was a major initiative in 1991. Professional development activities were used to assist schools and districts

to understand and implement the policy.

To provide a basis for further action, gender-based data on participation and performance were analysed. The results of that analysis were as follows:

- Retention to year 12—since 1987, the retention rates for girls and boys have diverged, with girls increasing their retention at a greater rate than boys.
- Participation in particular subjects—more girls study LOTE (year 12, 9 per cent v 3.5 per cent). Both girls and boys choose maths I (year 12, approximately 50 per cent each). More boys than girls study maths II and III, chemistry and physics in year 12:

maths II, III	70 per cent v 20 per cent
chemistry	35 per cent v 20 per cent
physics	35 per cent v 11 per cent

It should be noted, however, that the performance of girls in the Tertiary Entrance Examination (TEE) in all of these subjects is roughly equal or slightly superior to that of boys.

The proportion of the curriculum in year 10 taken up by each of the curriculum areas of English, maths, science and social studies is equal for boys and girls; that is, although participation in maths and physical science subjects is lower for girls in year 12, it is approximately equal at year 10 level.

- Overall performance—in year 12 girls have a slightly higher rate of secondary graduation than boys, but this is mostly explained by their higher retention rate. The performance of girls in year 10 is slightly higher than that of boys, as is seen in Table 2.
- Girls demonstrated slightly superior performance in year 7 reading and writing according to Monitoring Standards in Education (MSE) gender data (1990).

Strategies for increasing the participation of girls in areas which had been dominated by boys included the production in 1991 of a set of new posters, *Look into the Future*, targeting middle primary teachers and students. The Ministry of Education, together with the Department of Employment and Training (DET) and the Office of Women's Interests, supported the media campaign Maths Multiplies Your Choices, which was funded by the Public Education Endowment Trust. This campaign targeted girls and their parents and provided a 'hotline' and written information about courses and careers based on maths and science. In addition, the ministry sponsored the Women in Education Conference and the Challenges for the Future seminar, which 250 girls attended as guests of adult mentors.

Individual school programs included self-esteem and career awareness days for girls, special camps, debates, displays, and activities on topics such as International Women's Day.A pilot school developed curriculum materials based on the recommendations of the project on home economics and girls' post-school options. These materials will be disseminated nationally. Ministry schools continued to broaden girls' perceptions of non-traditional trades by utilising the Tradeswomen on the Move Program organised by DET.

The ministry upgraded residential facilities for girls at Harvey Agricultural Senior High School as part of the Equal Opportunity Program. Denmark Agricultural College also provided residential places for girls for the first time in 1991. The completion of these buildings has improved girls' access to agricultural education.

Through the MSE Project, systemwide data were gathered on mathematics and English language competency which will enable a gender-specific analysis to be made of student achievement in these areas. A measure of literacy achievement is the proportion of students who reach the benchmark Unit Curriculum stage in English. A general measure of numeracy attainment is the proportion of students who reach at least the benchmark Unit Curriculum stage in mathematics (some sample figures are included in Table 2).

Table 2. Percentage of a sample of year 10 male and female students passing at Unit Curriculum stage 4 or higher in English, 1988–91 and the percentage of year 10 male and female students passing at Unit Curriculum stage 3 or higher in mathematics, 1988–91

Year 10 literacy performance

Year	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*
1988	96.2	92.6	94.3
1989	96.9	94.7	95.8
1990	97.0	94.8	95.8
1991	96.2	94.0	95.0

Year 10 numeracy performance

Year	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*
1988	93.4	91.7	92.5
1989	94.9	93.6	94.2
1990	94.9	93.3	94.1
1991	93.4	92.0	92.7

Source: WA Ministry of Education

A survey of Catholic schools indicated widespread acknowledgment of the need to attend to the specific educational needs of girls. This was reflected by the increased number of consciousness-raising activities held with parents, staff and students; the evaluation of existing practices by a number of schools; the modification of some courses to attend to the needs of girls; and, more generally, the introduction, within existing courses, of materials and methodologies that promoted the full range of student interests and abilities.

Student participation in selected subject areas in the final year of schooling is indicated by the proportion of year 12 students who study in those areas. The following table lists the total student enrolment by gender in those subjects which attracted the largest accredited numbers and/or indicated the greatest gender differences in 1991. This provides an indication of where some of the initiatives described above may focus in the future.

General and vocational education

Impact of the Finn Report

The recommendations of the Finn Report are broadly consistent with directions announced during 1991 by the Western Australian Government for the post-compulsory schooling sector. In the medium to long term, if the Finn targets relating to entry-level training are to be attained, the impact on the Western Australian educational system will be substantial in areas such as:

- organisation of schooling and TAFE, as structures are modified to respond more effectively to the changing clientele;
- resource allocation to adjust plant and organisational structures, to meet the retraining needs of the service providers and, most significantly of all, to cater for increased numbers of students;
- course accreditation and certification requirements in the schooling and training sectors as a consequence of curriculum reforms.

This impact will be more significant in Western Australia where the increase in retention rates in the post-compulsory sector will occur against a background of increases in the school-age population. This demographic pattern will pose a much greater resource burden than in other States where school-age population will either be stable or will decline.

Changing arrangements for post-compulsory schooling

During 1991 the Ministry of Education, TAFE and the Secondary Education Authority (SEA) cooperated to address a number of issues related to increased retention rates and the need to improve the opportunities for education and training in Western Australia. The issues arose because of the expectation that, in the near future, 12 years of schooling will become the standard pattern for almost all young people to meet the demands of life in the next century. In summary, these changes will result in:

Table 3. Students studying a sample of year 12 accredited courses in 1991

	Number of students			*Per cent*
Course	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	
Chemistry	2,431	1,848	4,279	21.41
Computing	409	155	564	2.82
Early childhood studies	28	1,637	1,665	8.33
Economics	2,560	2,040	4,600	23.02
English	5,824	6,484	12,308	61.60
English literature	1,364	2,690	4,054	20.29
Geography	2,861	2,925	5,786	28.96
History	1,307	2,362	3,669	18.36
Human biology	2,161	5,017	7,178	35.92
Mathematics I	4,238	4,496	8,734	43.71
Mathematics II	1,390	662	2,052	10.27
Mathematics III	1,386	658	2,044	10.23
Physics	2,459	1,048	3,507	17.55
Typewriting and business communication	41	972	1,013	5.07
Word processing	30	274	304	1.52

Source: WA Ministry of Education

- stronger links between schooling and the world of work;
- well-defined standards of skills to which the majority of students can aspire;
- more variety in the arrangements for teaching and learning.

During 1991 working parties with representation from schools, TAFE, employers and the community began to develop vocational pathways in the following areas: agriculture/natural resource management; art and design; health, social and community services; performing arts; applied sciences; business systems; hospitality/food/tourism; and technology and design. These vocational pathways represented a shift in focus from individual subjects and courses to broader programs of study which related to fields of employment.

The key features of pathways include:

- clear entry points into TAFE, universities and employment;
- common requirements for the Secondary Graduation Certificate;
- equivalence to two years' full-time study in years 11 and 12;
- development of a core of general skills which can be used in the workplace;
- flexibility to change direction, both within and between the pathways.

The Ministry of Education operates six residential agricultural schools and colleges. Five of these facilities offer post-year-10 programs for students wishing to pursue a career in agriculture or a related industry. During 1991 a range of strategies was developed to allow closer relationships among the agricultural colleges and schools and TAFE for the delivery of agricultural programs to the wider community. The Pathways Project Working Party also developed post-year-12 pathways for agricultural college students who wished to proceed to further education.

In various Catholic schools, increasing retention in the post-compulsory years resulted in a number of full-scale curriculum reviews. This reflected the need to broaden subject choice, especially for lower achieving students. A significant trend was the increased introduction of work studies into schools.

Research into the need for a senior college was also undertaken by the Catholic Education Commission. While limited in scope, the research identified little current need among Catholic school students for a college at which tertiary entrance was the main focus. However, it did determine that lower achieving students were looking for an alternative to the comprehensive school model, either as years 11 and 12 students or as 'post secondary' students.

School–TAFE–higher education links

An implementation group representing the key stakeholders—the Ministry of Education, Office of TAFE, Secondary Education Authority and State Employment and Skills Development Authority—drafted an operational plan outlining the timing and designating agencies responsible for achieving the Government's policies on post-compulsory education. The Pathways Project described above is the major strategy within the plan and its aim is to maximise each student's post-school options in TAFE, higher education or employment. Progress with the operational plan was affected during 1991 by the merger of the Office of TAFE and the Department of Employment and Training to form the new Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training.

Only a small percentage of Catholic schools had formal course links with TAFE in 1991. However, because of the proposed changes to the linkage between schools and TAFE in Western Australia announced by the Minister in September, the situation was monitored closely by the Catholic Education Commission.

Career education

During 1991 the National Career Education Project, hosted by Western Australia, developed a set of goals, student outcome statements and appropriate evaluative procedures which will form the basis for career education in Western Australia and other States and Territories.

Six Western Australian senior high schools in metropolitan and country areas trialled career education programs which provided students with improved links between their study programs and future vocations. Typically, the programs involved:

- specific career education courses (education and work studies);
- counselling on a needs basis;
- structured experiences of work.

A detailed report describing the procedures, resources and outcomes of the project is available.

Career education initiatives also expanded considerably in the Catholic education system during 1991, professional development being given a particular focus. Several workshops were held for teachers, guidance officers and career counsellors from Catholic schools.

Transition from education to work

The Innovative Skills Training and Education Program (INSTEP) was developed during 1991. INSTEP is a pilot program in which an agreed list of skills/competencies developed in consultation with local businesses is matched with the objectives of existing accredited courses. Students will undertake one day per week of structured work experience during which the employers or their employees

will take responsibility for their learning and assessment. INSTEP links schooling with on-the-job training and provides students with opportunities to apply skills acquired in either environment to the requirements in the other. In 1992 it will be piloted in three senior high and one district high school.

During 1991 the ministry continued to support seven schools engaged in the development of technology-oriented partnerships with business and industry under a project entitled Technology Education Employment Partnerships (TEEP). TEEP has resulted in some close, mutually beneficial relationships developing between schools and local businesses.

Attitudinal perception

During 1991 the Catholic Education Commission undertook limited research with students completing schooling at year 10, 11 or 12 to determine their attitudes to their secondary education with a view to addressing any particular problems. The Catholic Education Office also communicated extensively with schools, staff and parent bodies, particularly on issues related to post-compulsory education.

Informal feedback received by government schools indicated widespread support for the post-compulsory schooling initiatives. This came from students, parents, employers and teachers and provided an important basis for the continuation of this work into 1992.

Areas of learning

English

Draft student outcome statements for English and communication were developed in 1991 and will be released in a working draft form in February 1992.

The phased implementation of the new K–7 English language syllabus proceeded smoothly during 1991. It is anticipated that from the beginning of 1993 all primary schools will have adopted the new syllabus.

A new handwriting style and policy, in line with Australian Education Council agreement on greater compatibility between the systems, was developed in 1991 for implementation by 1994. Although some minor concerns persist, the current rate of uptake by schools suggests that the change has been accepted widely.

The Monitoring Standards in Education (MSE) Program released a report on the performance of students in English based on system-level testing in 1990. A trial was also conducted of system-level assessment in oral language and media analysis. Results from the sample testing of literacy and numeracy performance at years 3, 7 and 10 are reported in *Educational Standards in Western Australian Government Schools 1990*. A summary of the key results is shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. Percentage of a sample of students in years 3, 7 and 10 achieving at, above and below, a specified level in reading, 1990

Reading 1990	*Year 3*	*Year 7*	*Year 10*
Below benchmark	11	15	10
At the benchmark	66	69	89
Above benchmark	23	16	1

Source: WA Ministry of Education

Table 5. Percentage of a sample of students in years 3, 7 and 10 achieving at, above and below, a specified level in writing, 1990

Writing 1990	*Year 3*	*Year 7*	*Year 10*
Below benchmark	10	14	8
At the benchmark	74	76	82
Above benchmark	16	10	10

Source: WA Ministry of Education

As a result of wide-ranging syllabus changes, continued support was provided for teachers of English subjects in Catholic schools. Professional development activities covered such topics as the literary theory (English literature) and non-print media (English) sections of the courses. To foster innovation and individuality in programming, workshops for teachers were conducted with the focus on school-based curriculum development. Through regular school visits, individual teachers were advised on curriculum, assessment and classroom strategies in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.

Teachers were also involved in responding to the *National Draft Statement on English*.

Literacy across the curriculum was addressed, in the first instance, through professional development of teachers in years 7–10. Particular emphasis was placed on the needs of specific groups of students, e.g. NESB and Aboriginal, although it was designed for all students with low-level literacy skills.

In other non-government schools, the development of student skills in English literacy was emphasised, particularly those in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Languages other than English (LOTE)

LOTE includes all languages other than English taught in Western Australian primary and secondary schools, as well as those taught in ethnic school programs. Six of these languages (Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian

and Japanese) are offered as tertiary entrance subjects. LOTE also includes initiatives related to Aboriginal languages.

In 1991 LOTE was one of the eight learning areas to be declared a ministry priority. The ministry's LOTE Strategic Plan, a ten-year framework for expansion and implementation of LOTE programs in government primary and secondary schools, was released. All core curriculum development and implementation is occurring within the context of this strategic plan.

Activities during 1991 included the following:

- A framework for teaching Aboriginal languages in primary schools with predominantly Aboriginal enrolments was completed and trialled in ten government and Catholic schools. It will be published during 1992.
- Work on the National K–12 Japanese Language Curriculum Project continued and beginners' courses for French, German, Italian and Japanese at the post-compulsory level were developed.
- Twenty teachers were trained in primary LOTE teaching methodology and a corresponding number of new programs commenced in primary schools.

Table 6. Students receiving grades in at least one LOTE year 12 course according to school type, 1991

Type of school	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Government	146	435	581
Non-government	169	545	714

Source: WA Ministry of Education

The largest single issue associated with this area of learning is the provision of competent teachers (both in terms of language proficiency and methodology) to meet the demand which currently exists, particularly in primary schools. This is a special problem for the Japanese language.

In Catholic schools continued support was given to the implementation of the Australian Language Levels Guidelines and the relevant curriculum documents within existing LOTE programs. Initiatives to encourage the introduction of LOTE in Catholic schools were explored. Issues that emerged included the training of teachers for primary classes, the availability of trained teachers for some languages, the impact of timetabling constraints with respect to content, the suitability of the particular LOTE subjects offered in a school, and the continuity of LOTE between primary and secondary schools.

Science

During 1991 moves were made to redesign science learning K–12 in ways which would make it a more powerful component of a student's education. These included:

- planning for sample testing of students' understanding of science at years 3, 7 and 10 during 1992. This will provide information to enable development of suitable student outcome statements at different year levels;
- development of trial pathways in post-compulsory schooling which will include components of science appropriate to particular pathways chosen;
- approval for a syllabus change and implementation, beginning in 1993, of new year 11 and 12 physics courses;
- development of a structure in which student outcome statements for K–12 can be written to reflect changing emphases in science learning.

To assist with the teaching and learning of science in the Catholic system, a formal network involving secondary heads of science was established in 1991. This curriculum network was supported by the provision of a number of professional development seminars or workshops for teachers of primary and secondary science, covering topics such as science enrichment, syllabus change, assessment and the role of the senior teacher. Teachers were also involved with responding to the *National Draft Statement on Science*. Teacher support materials for introductory science courses were developed under the Commonwealth Literacy and Learning Program, particularly for use in isolated schools whose population is largely Aboriginal.

Technology education

Technology is concerned with identifying and solving practical problems to meet human needs. Business education, manual arts, home economics and computing studies provide the subject context for this area and one of the key aims has been to develop a framework for delivery of transferable competencies to provide students with skills for effective participation as both consumers and contributors in a rapidly changing future.

Initiated in 1990, the manual arts curriculum review was presented in July 1991. The review strongly supports the expansion of manual arts in the technology area and the thrust of national curriculum.

Technology education was identified as one of the eight broad curriculum areas for the development of student outcome statements K-12. Western Australia contributed to the development of the national curriculum through steering group and reference group membership and provided a mechanism for State-level consultation with broad representational groups. *The National Statement on Technology* underpins the development of the student outcomes.

A working party of teachers from Catholic schools was formed in 1991 to examine and frame a response to the national statement.

Other non-government schools in Western Australia emphasised goals involving the development of the skills and knowledge of students in understanding the role of science and technology in society, together with scientific and technological skills in information processing and computing. Examples of strategies in these areas included introducing science camps and providing resources, such as extra teachers of computing and computer hardware and software.

Mathematics

National collaboration activities in 1991 included providing copies of the *National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools* to all government schools and all Parents and Citizens' associations. Support was given to the launching of the professional development materials produced by the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers. Development of the *National Profiles in Mathematics* materials was assessed by a reference group; teachers produced student samples; 19 teachers were involved in the validation of the pointers for the Australian Council for Educational Research and ten schools trialled the profiles. The ministry provided resources for the development of the Using Mathematics key competency area for the Mayer Committee and an officer was seconded in term 4, 1991 to the Chance and Data Project sponsored by the Curriculum Corporation.

National profiles are to be used as the bases for student outcome statements, which are to become central parts of the mathematics curriculum policy. They are being trialled across the State in a number of schools. The ministry is particularly interested in their use for different populations and isolated geographic areas. They are also being used as the framework for the First Steps Project to ensure that students who have learning difficulties in the early years receive attention. In addition, there is interest in determining how cross-curricular issues (e.g. literacy, problem solving) can be enhanced, judged and reported on.

Evaluation undertaken by the Science and Mathematics Education Centre provided some figures which showed the structure of courses was providing improved flexibility for students and that girls were achieving at a higher level than boys in all courses except introductory calculus, where achievements were approximately equal. Benefits for low achievers were not immediately obvious in the new structure.

New mathematics courses were introduced at senior secondary level in Catholic schools and teachers were assisted through the conduct of seminars, the work of the mathematics curriculum network, continuing liaison with syllabus committees and an extensive program of school visits and telephone communication. In the lower secondary area, an integrated program of year 8 mathematics, based on the Unit Curriculum, was developed for use by schools.

Table 7. Percentage of a sample of students in years 3, 7 and 10 achieving at, above and below, a specified level in mathematics in 1990.

Measurement 1990	*Year 3*	*Year 7*	*Year 10*
Below benchmark	9	12	26
At the benchmark	67	69	48
Above benchmark	24	19	26
Space 1990			
Below benchmark	8	4	15
At the benchmark	81	78	50
Above benchmark	11	18	35
Number 1990			
Below benchmark	12	4	5
At the benchmark	69	79	56
Above benchmark	19	17	39

Source: WA Ministry of Education

Considerable work was done early in the year with respect to the *National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools*. Consultative meetings were conducted with teachers and professional associations. Following the release of the statement, a seminar for teachers was arranged to explore its implications for teachers and curriculum development.

Studies of society and the environment

The studies of society and the environment (SSE) learning area includes a variety of courses across all years of schooling: single-discipline subjects such as economics, geography, history, politics and ancient history and multidisciplinary subjects such as Aboriginal studies, religious studies and local area studies.

A number of issues are associated with SSE, including:

- the difficulty in delineating the field of study within such a broad area as SSE, which has been highlighted by the *National Curriculum Design Brief;*
- the Post-Compulsory Pathways Project, which identifies one of the compulsory elements as cultural understanding. A strategy group is working towards defining and developing strategies for achieving this understanding.

Curriculum development in 1991 was focused on student outcome statements which, after consultation, will be trialled in schools in 1993.

A curriculum review of social science education in Western Australia was released in 1990 and the ministry's response, entitled *Social Studies in Prospect*, recommended a number of changes to the K–10 social studies syllabus. Apart from those relating to 'active citizenship', other recommendations have been deferred until the completion of the student outcome statements.

Four Aboriginal studies units were written and are being trialled in a number of metropolitan and country schools during 1991–92. These units deal with Aboriginal culture—its origins, pre-European Aboriginal societies and changes and issues since the European habitation of Australia commenced.

Efforts were made to ensure that SSE materials and courses were inclusive of the backgrounds and needs of all students. Special populations were specifically identified in the *National Curriculum Design Brief*: girls, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, ESL learners and other students with special needs (talented and gifted students and those students with learning and physical disabilities). The working party developing the student outcome statements is incorporating these nationally identified recommendations.

In 1991 major changes were made to the year 12 geography course. The Catholic Education Commission was invited to become associated with the implementation strategy, which involved participation in the conduct of seminars and workshops for teachers around the State. Other professional development activities focused on the needs of teachers in the areas of Asian studies, Aboriginal studies, integration of Catholic teachings and the adoption of Effective Reading In Content Areas (ERICA) strategies in the teaching of the social science curriculum. A curriculum network for heads of departments was introduced in 1991 to provide collegial and professional support and was formalised for the social sciences. School visits supported the individual needs of teachers.

The arts

The arts in schools—dance, drama and theatre, music, and visual art and design—were healthy in terms of numbers of students, the implementation of syllabuses and the development of student learning outcome statements. Significant input was made to the development of the *National Arts Statement* as part of the National Collaboration on the Curriculum Project.

Dance continued to grow in importance in the school curriculum and links were made with the triennial dance initiatives of the Department of the Arts.

The continued provision of performing arts centres in new secondary schools was a major factor in developing effective drama and theatre programs.

In 1991 a new accredited course, Music in Society, was written for years 11 and 12.

As schools take greater direct responsibility in the arts, more innovative programs are developing, such as those linking visual arts and technology and fashion and graphic design. The implementation of the K–7 art syllabus continued, supported by the art specialists in primary schools.

Artist Alma Toomath assists development of understanding of Aboriginal culture

The Festivals and Special Projects grants scheme generated considerable activity in the arts in schools, supporting 32 projects. Festivals of performing arts, dance, drama and music were held and an exhibition of visual art successfully staged. Artists-in-residence programs (in both the visual and performing arts) were used to stimulate interest and broaden students' learning opportunities. Speech awards and other arts initiatives were mounted in more than 150 country and metropolitan schools.

A series of informal network meetings was conducted for teachers of art/crafts in Catholic schools to assist improved understanding of the developments in this curriculum area. In 1991 the Performing Arts Coordinator continued to advise primary teachers and to implement performing arts programs. A performing arts festival was held which involved 63 schools.

Other non-government schools in Western Australia also emphasised goals involving the development of the skills and knowledge of students in the appreciation and understanding of the creative arts. Schools adopted such strategies as introducing violin lessons and employing specialist art and music teachers.

Health

The health curriculum is implemented through the subject areas of physical education, health education and some components of home economics, with links to other learning areas. In 1991 issues associated with health as an area of study were:

- inadequate curriculum attention to several public health issues (e.g. sexuality education, HIV/AIDS education);
- lack of syllabus support and balanced programming in primary school physical education;
- continued emergence of new health issues and subsequent pressures on curriculum documentation, such as a need to focus on teenage girls, who are recognised as a special population exhibiting special health and lifestyle concerns.

Curriculum development, implementation and assessment activity included:

- writing student outcome statements for K–12 in the health area, to be completed by December 1992;
- implementation of prevention education, through integration with the K–10 health education syllabus;
- liaison and collaboration with the Health Department of Western Australia in the development of health curriculum materials suitable for schools attended primarily by Aboriginal students;
- liaison with professional associations and the Ministry of Sport and Recreation to facilitate the provision of professional support for primary school physical education.

About half the non-government schools in Western Australia actively sought to encourage all students to achieve high standards of learning and self-development in the health and lifestyle area. Schools adopted such strategies as investigating alternative pastoral care structures, teaching conflict resolution skills, instituting discussion groups and encouraging students' participation in planning.

A goal highlighted as important by other non-government schools was provision for the physical development and personal health and fitness of students. Strategies employed included extending sporting and recreation programs and introducing an Aussie Sport Program, and dance and movement activities. Another goal, the physical development of primary students, was addressed by increasing participation in sports, undertaking health curriculum reviews and providing extra staff and resources.

Teaching and learning

Quality of teaching

Over the next decade, Western Australia will experience growth in the school-age population well above the Australian average.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics predicts that the national school-age population will grow by some 4.6 per cent by 2001. However, the population of this State will grow by 16.9 per cent, almost four times this rate. This is a projected increase of 65,000 young people.

Coupled with the predicted increases in retention rates, this growth will require significant changes in organisation and delivery to maintain the provision of quality schooling in a time of economic restraint.

The number of teaching staff in government schools increased by 68 (0.47 per cent) to 14,459 FTE in 1991. At the same time, the number of teachers employed in non-government schools increased by 126 (2.8 per cent) to 4,502.4 FTE staff.

Table 8. School-based teaching staff (a) by level and gender, government schools, Western Australia, July 1991

	Female	*Male*	*Total*
Preschool (b)	108	0	108
Pre-primary	463	4	467
Primary	5,362	2,129	7,491
Secondary	2,770	3,221	5,991
Education support (c)	312	80	392
Total	**9,015**	**5,434**	**14,449**

(a) Numbers shown are full-time equivalent (FTE) rounded to the nearest whole number. (b) Government teaching staff at community preschools. (c) Includes teachers in education support schools and centres.

Source: WA Ministry of Education

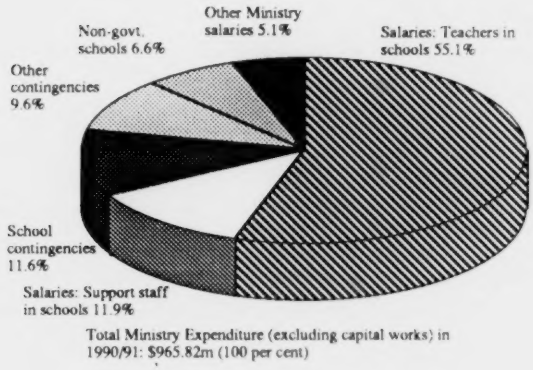
Student teacher ratios indicate steady improvement in all government school sectors, as indicated in Table 9.

Table 9. Student–teacher ratios, government schools, including the Distance Education Centre and senior colleges, selected years

Year	*Primary (including ES)*	*Primary*	*Education Support*	*Secondary (excl. P/T)*
1976	24.1	24.5	9.4	14.3
1981	21.6	22.1	7.9	13.0
1986	19.4	20.1	6.4	12.8
1991	18.0	18.7	5.2	12.8

Source: WA Ministry of Education

Figure 2. Ministry of Education, major expenditure items, 1990–91


Other Ministry salaries 5.1%
Non-govt. schools 6.6%
Salaries: Teachers in schools 55.1%
Other contingencies 9.6%
School contingencies 11.6%
Salaries: Support staff in schools 11.9%
Total Ministry Expenditure (excluding capital works) in 1990/91: $965.82m (100 per cent)

Source: WA Ministry of Education

It can be seen that in 1990–91, $697.01 million, or 72 per cent of the ministry's expenditure, was on staff salaries, including $532.48 million, or 55.2 per cent, on salaries for teachers in schools. This major expenditure alone explains an increasing focus on maximising the quality of the teaching force.

The 1991 *Memorandum of Agreement* between the Ministry of Education and the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia continued to be the vehicle for cooperative development of improved student outcomes based on devolution in the government school system.

Staff selection

In 1991 the new merit promotion system was introduced successfully for the largest group of the school-based promotional positions (Level 3 appointments). The system is to be extended to include all school-based promotional positions in 1992.

The Job Analysis Project team completed a comprehensive analysis of all school-based promotional positions. The resulting position descriptions contain context and scope statements, responsibilities of each position, and selection criteria. During 1992 the project will be extended to encompass all classroom teaching positions, Education Act officers, the Central and District Offices and staff employed in the School Psychology Service.

The standardisation of promotional positions in Catholic secondary schools continued in 1991. To encourage teachers to teach in the remote Kimberley schools, a secondment program was introduced in 1990.

Professional development and training

District Offices offered a range of key professional development courses. In 1991 training was provided in First Steps (an early literacy program), the year 6–9 Language and Literacy Development Program, the Managing Student Behaviour Program, preparing promotion applications, school development planning and participative decision making. Other miscellaneous training related mainly to new initiatives and policy directions.

The Schools Professional Development Consortium is a joint activity of employers and tertiary institutions, supported primarily by the Ministry of Education. In 1991 it secured education industry-wide agreement to proceed with a comprehensive course registration and quality control program for Western Australian teachers' professional development activities. This program will begin in 1992 and will apply initially to more than 250 registered courses. Where appropriate, these courses will also be eligible to participate in the consortium's academic transfer program.

The ministry's Professional Development and Training Unit was established in March 1991 and operates on a fee-for-service basis. Its purpose is to promote professional growth for all ministry employees in order to further develop quality education for students. The unit conducted a comprehensive analysis of the professional development and training needs of ministry employees and then developed and presented some 205 courses in response to these needs.

The recently established School Leadership Unit designs and delivers professional development opportunities for staff in school promotional positions. In 1991 it conducted induction courses for newly promoted personnel. It also developed and trialled a School Financial Management and Planning course and a School Leadership Program for principals of larger schools. A program for all other school leaders is planned for 1992.

Teachers on Professional Studies (TOPS) awards are cash incentives to help teachers undertake study interstate or overseas during their school holidays. In 1991 TOPS awards were made to 27 people. In addition, 44 staff went on exchange interstate or overseas. These exchanges are intended to meet the professional development needs of staff who wish to experience different teaching environments.

The 20 Year Collegium, which was launched in October 1991, aims to recognise long service, encourage effective monitoring of less experienced classroom teachers and share ideas with other teachers and the wider community. In 1991, 350 people registered for membership of the collegium.

In 1991, 17 teachers participated in the Industry Access Scheme, which is designed to enable them to work in a business or enterprise related to their area of expertise.

Six schools won Education Innovation Awards for achievements in classroom practice and school management.

Professional development programs in the Catholic education system included: accreditation programs for new

teachers, religious education coordinators, new principals and others in leadership positions; in-service courses in various curriculum areas for primary and secondary teachers; induction for new members; in-service courses in management and negotiation skills; and a peer review process for both primary and secondary principals.

In 1991 a number of other non-government schools emphasised maximising the competence, confidence and efficiency of teachers. Examples of strategies employed by schools in order to meet this goal included extending professional development activities, employing specialists to assist teachers and students, establishing a peer support scheme, providing extra resources and developing self-pacing modules of work.

Teaching contexts

In 1991 the school system provided a greater variety of school arrangements for teaching and learning. For example, initial development of 'telematics' (integrated use of telecommunications, linked interactive computers and facsimile) commenced in the Esperance district. Plans have been developed to extend this to all schools in the district as well as to several schools in the Moora and Kimberley districts.

A Learning Centre Network, linking Kununurra, Derby and Broome with Perth, was developed in conjunction with TAFE, the Western Australian Office of Higher Education and Telecom/OTC.

Computer access was provided for LOTE (French, Italian, Japanese) and ESL bridging English courses (year 11); Aboriginal studies will be included in the future.

Distance education provided by the Distance Education Centre (Perth) continued to use print-based materials, audio tapes, pre-recorded video tapes and interactive video programs transmitted through the Golden West Network (GWN). In addition, the Carnarvon School of the Air developed a series of lesson and resource materials using Hypercard stacks (a form of computer-assisted learning).

Developments associated with teachers

In December 1991 agreement was reached to adopt the national benchmark salary for classroom teachers of $38,000 per annum. The salaries of staff in promotional positions were adjusted upward to maintain relativities. Further agreement was reached to allow three-year trained teachers access to the salary scale of four-year trained teachers (i.e. the level 2 salary).

The ministry established a temporary teacher standing committee to consider further improvements to the working conditions of temporary teachers.

The First Steps Project provided curriculum support packages which enabled teachers to implement programs based on a finely tuned diagnosis of a student's current levels of understanding and skill development, thus ensuring that students made satisfactory progress. School development officers (appointed to the 15 districts participating fully) provided direct support for teachers in classrooms and worked collaboratively with the five central team members to provide ten days' professional development for participating teachers. Twenty-four collaborative teachers gave direct support for teachers in schools with the greatest number of students at risk.

Nineteen schools with large numbers of Aboriginal students received additional classroom support from 11 specially trained teachers through the English Literacy and Numeracy for Aboriginal Students Program. Intensive action research took place to ensure that all materials were adapted to suit the specific needs of Aboriginal children and those for whom English was a second language. In 1991 work also commenced on the development of a package for parents.

By the end of 1991, 341 schools, 3,667 teachers and 52,409 students had participated in First Steps.

Stepping Out is a Commonwealth-funded project aimed at meeting the literacy needs of upper primary and lower secondary school students through professional development of teachers with students in years 6–10. The project focuses on schools with large numbers of disadvantaged students. In total, 400 teachers participated in the professional development program, which consisted of 10 three-hour sessions, each focusing on specific aspects of literacy in the secondary school.

In Catholic schools, literacy was addressed on a cross-curriculum basis through the professional development of teachers of years 7–10, an emphasis on the needs of specific student groups (e.g. NESB, Aboriginal and remote students) and the development of supporting resource materials under the auspices of the Commonwealth Literacy and Language Program.

National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL)

During 1991 the Ministry of Education participated in this project, which recognised that the increasing demands on the education sector to demonstrate greater productivity would require fundamental rethinking of how quality learning could be guaranteed in Australian schools. The Board of Management of the NPQTL met initially in February 1991.

Among the major initiatives to emerge from the NPQTL was the National Schools Project, an action research plan in which pilot schools will examine ways in which work organisation in schools can be changed in order to improve student learning. Seven Western Australian schools were invited to join the project in 1991.

In each State, a peak steering group has been established with membership from teacher unions and employers. The steering groups are required to consider the proposals that come from the pilot schools and, where necessary, to seek agreement on waiving existing policies and rules that preclude the pilot schools from adopting innovative work organisation arrangements. In Western Australia the pilot schools are regarded as important vehicles for advancing the devolution program jointly agreed to by the Ministry of Education and the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia as expressed in the 1990 and 1991 *Memoranda of Agreement.*

Another key initiative was the development of a proposal to raise the status of teaching by establishing a national teaching council managed by the teaching profession and given responsibility for the development of nationally endorsed standards of teaching.

A third initiative was the development of a project to establish competency-based standards for teaching which could serve as a basis for the planning of appropriate training programs for both pre-service and in-service teaching.

Resourcing Western Australian schools

Recurrent and capital funding for Western Australian government schools is the responsibility of the ministry and includes allocations from Commonwealth recurrent and capital assistance programs. All funding requests are considered by the State Treasury, which recommends budget allocations through the Expenditure Review Committee. Recurrent funding for new programs, while limited, is allocated in accordance with overall government policy and priorities frameworks in accordance with Cabinet decisions. The capital works budget is also determined by government priorities and an assessment of community needs.

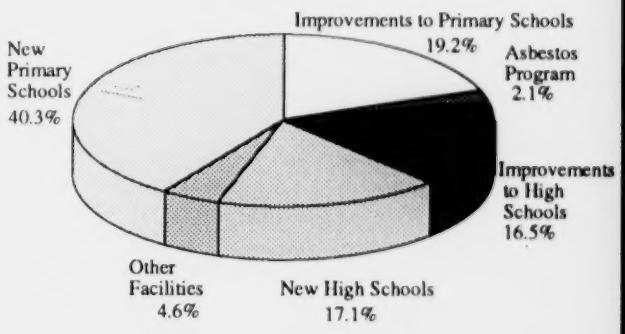
The recurrent resourcing of government schools is formula driven, based primarily on the number of students and the level and type of education undertaken by a particular school. Teaching and ancillary support staff in schools are allocated in accordance with student enrolments and class or form numbers within each school. Cleaning, gardening and support staff are allocated in accordance with the physical requirements of the school and recurrent costs of a non-salary nature are either allocated in accordance with student numbers or, for utilities costs, based on historical consumption levels. Special additional staffing and contingency funding is provided to schools enrolling students with particular needs such as education support, remote Aboriginal schools and schools with students who have physical and learning disabilities.

Table 10. Capital works expenditure 1990–91 ($000)

New high schools		9,328
Additions and improvements to high schools		
Additional stages —high schools	1,943	
Improvements—high schools	3,521	
Improvements—District high schools	3,554	
Improvements—Agricultural schools	13	9,031
New primary schools		
New schools	18,673	
Early starts	3,345	22,018
Additions and improvements to primary schools		
Additional stages —primary schools	8,140	
Improvements—primary schools	1,512	
Aboriginal schools	847	10,499
Asbestos program	1,155	
Other school facilities	2,504	
Total program		
	54,535	

Source: WA Ministry of Education

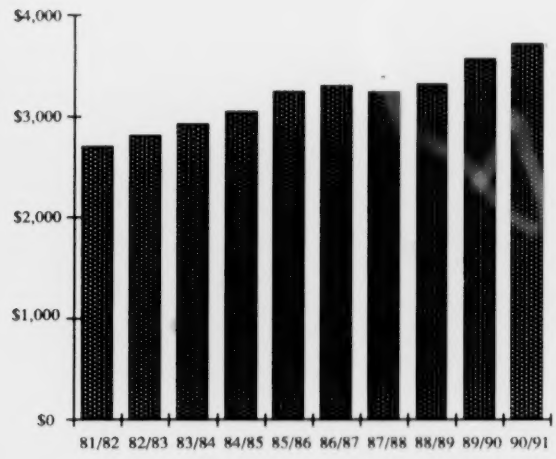
Figure 3. Capital works expenditure, 1990–91



Source: WA Ministry of Education

The salaries of all full-time, part-time and casual staff are paid by the ministry's central office. However, as part of the devolution process there has been a gradual increase in the funds made available to schools for local decision making and grants to schools amounted to $32 million in 1991. In order to assist schools with the devolution of decision making and funding responsibilities, policy and guidelines statements have been released in 1990 and 1991 on school development plans, school decision making, school financial planning and management, and school accountability. Per capita recurrent expenditure on government schools has increased gradually as indicated in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Per capita recurrent expenditure, selected years



Source: WA Ministry of Education

Recurrent funding for schools in the non-government sector emanates from Commonwealth general recurrent grants, State per capita grants and private income, of which school fees form the major portion.

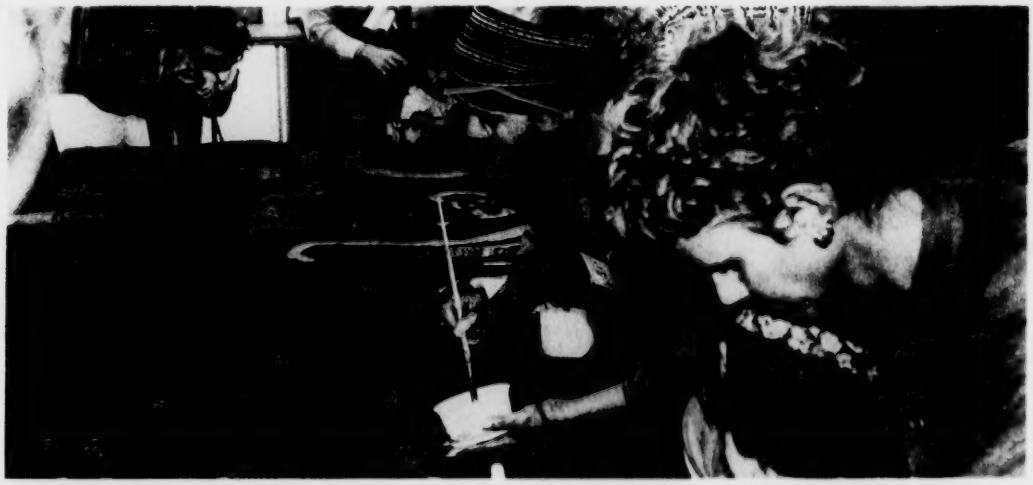
Additional recurrent income is provided by Commonwealth specific purpose programs. In 1991 all non-government schools received an increase in State per capita grants of between 4.8 and 6.8 per cent, depending on the individual school's classification, bringing assistance to non-government schools through per capita grants by the State to $54.4 million in 1990–91. In addition, the State Government provided a significant amount of assistance to non-government schools through student transport arrangements, school stocks, school guidance officer services, curriculum materials and assistance for students from needy families.

Capital funding for the non-government sector is provided from Commonwealth capital grants, State Government low-interest loans, each school's private income and, in the case of the Catholic school system, co-responsibility building funds. State Government low-interest loans amounted to $36 million in 1990–91 and are the major source of assistance for capital works in the non-government school sector.

Recurrent funding to the ministry in 1990–91 was $965.8 million, which included $77 million funding from the Commonwealth. In all, Ministry of Education funding for education amounted to 19.5 per cent of the total State Government Consolidated Revenue Fund expenditure. In 1990–91 a Capital Works Program of $54.5 million was undertaken in government schools with the Commonwealth contributing $20.168 million or 37 per cent under the Commonwealth capital programs for schools.

The ministry is continuing its policy of devolution by progressively incorporating within the School Grant budget elements formerly controlled within the central office on behalf of schools. Many of the non-salary costs originally paid from central office are now included in the School Grant. In addition, in 1991 the ministry began trialling a Utilities Management Program in 29 schools in the Kimberley, Karratha and Hedland districts. This involves the transfer of funds to enable schools to manage power, water, postage, telecommunications, fuel, gas and oil consumption. Participation in the program allows schools to utilise a proportion of the savings achieved.

The ministry operates a program entitled School Renewal, which seeks to improve the quality of education delivered to the community, while at the same time improving the cost effectiveness of education delivery. The criteria for the commencement of School Renewal projects are based on curriculum assurance, equity and social justice issues and cost-effective delivery mechanisms. Approval has been obtained from the government to establish a School Renewal Trust Fund from which the net proceeds from the sale of land, buildings and other assets are reappropriated to assist in financing school improvement projects.



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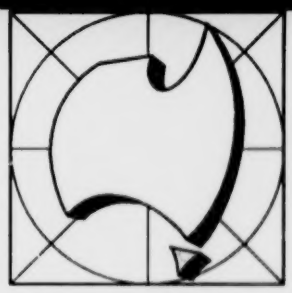


Priority objectives for 1991

In Tasmania there are three types of schooling available: the State government system; Catholic schools, which are made up of 29 systemic schools and eight non-systemic schools; and a range of independent schools. They are referred to as government schools, Catholic schools and independent schools, or where appropriate, as government and non-government schools. In government schools, students attend primary school (kindergarten to year 6), high school (year 7 to year 10) and then proceed to college (for years 11 to 12). In some country areas students attend district high schools which range from kindergarten to year 10.

Government schools

The Department of Education and the Arts developed a new Strategic Plan during 1991. It contains the department's mission statement and goals and also identifies a number of priority tasks to be completed over various time frames during the decade. The plan essentially establishes a formal relationship between the department, the Minister for Education and the Arts and the Tasmanian community to deliver positive educational, cultural and arts outcomes for the people of the State.

The Australian Education Council Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia have been directly incorporated into the Strategic Plan to form Tasmania's goals for education. As such, they will have a direct and profound bearing on all educational planning and direction in government schools over the next decade.

Nineteen ninety-one was a year of restructuring. In accordance with the principles of effective schools, responsibility for decision making was increasingly devolved. Eight districts replaced the three regions and were given the responsibility for working closely with schools in the implementation of systemwide policy and the provision of school support.

This chapter reflects a focus on the national goals. It also demonstrates a commitment both to self-managing schools and to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning across the State.

Catholic schools

Within the ongoing broad objectives of Catholic schooling, as outlined in 1990, Catholic schools focus particularly on:

- the building of faith communities;
- excellence in teaching and learning;
- the improvement of teacher confidence and competence.

Catholic schools acknowledge the importance of the national goals and find that they are generally in accord with the priority objectives of these goals as a subset of the wider goals of Catholic education.

Table 1. Government schools, type and enrolments, Tasmania, 1991

Type	*No.*	*Full-time*	*Part-time*	*Total FTE*
Special schools and units	20	659	215	708
Kindergartens (unlinked)	19	0	762	324
Primary	163	33,046	4,971	36,159
District High	26	7,196	722	7,495
High	34	17,738	7	17,740
Secondary college	8	7,023	1,488	7,428
Total	**270**	**65,662**	**8,165**	**69,854**

Source: Department of Education and the Arts, Tasmania

Independent schools

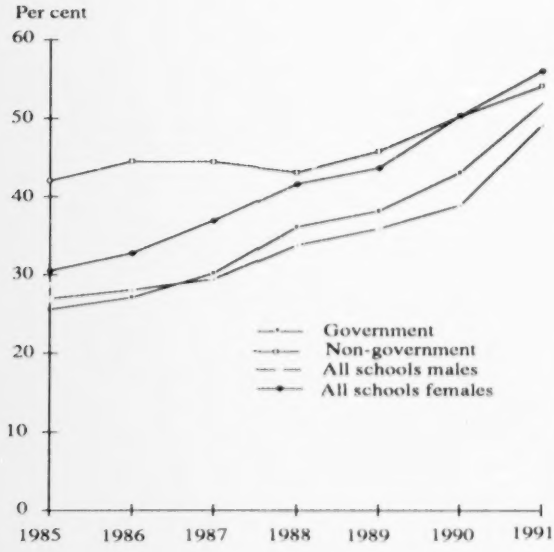
Independent schools have their own objectives, which reflect the priorities and distinctive features of each school. Despite this diversity, virtually all independent schools acknowledge the importance of the national goals as a useful basis upon which to build their own, additional priorities.

Priorities for the Tasmanian Seventh-Day Adventist system in 1991 were to develop students' numeracy skills and to implement a self-evaluation program in its schools.

Excellence and equity

Retention rates to year 12

Figure 1. Year 7 to year 12 apparent retention rate, 1985–91



Source: Department of Education and the Arts, Tasmania

There has been a dramatic increase in retention since 1985. Retention is increasing at a greater rate in government than in non-government schools and female retention is still well above male retention.

Issues connected with effective schools

Financial responsibility and government schools

In 1991, through the new school resource package, the amount of funding provided directly to schools and colleges was significantly increased.

The package combined both State and Commonwealth funding and included funding for electricity, Telecom, facility maintenance and small minor works. Its funding allocation comprised a base grant, a per capita grant, a needs per capita grant and a rurality per capita grant. Towards the end of 1991, a task force which included school representatives reviewed the methodology used for school funding. As a result, a revised funding formula will be implemented in 1992 which has an increased emphasis on a per capita grant and on disability (needs and rurality per capita grants).

In accordance with the principle of extending school-based management, minimal controls were placed on the nature of expenditures in schools. The only tied funding provided in the package was for facility maintenance funding, with expenditures in this area being centrally monitored.

Accountability procedures have been established and schools are required to submit both an annual budget and a development plan which outlines objectives for the year. As a monthly financial reporting mechanism, all schools prepare a standard report on the broad revenue and expenditure categories set by the department. These reports are included in the department's annual report to the Auditor General.

Program budgeting was introduced in schools during 1991, accompanied by extensive training. Approximately 75 per cent of schools utilise specially developed computer-based accounting systems.

Community participation

For government schools, interim guidelines on school and college councils were developed through an extensive consultative process. The guidelines do not impose a single council model on schools but make it mandatory that where councils are established they should have a decision-making role in school policy and (for secondary schools and colleges) should include students as members.

During 1991 there was an upsurge of interest in councils, with many school communities regarding them as an integral part of school self-management. By the end of the year, approximately 70 per cent of schools had either established councils or had begun the process.

Over the past 15 years Catholic schools have developed various means of community participation in their activities through formally constituted boards of management or councils. These operate effectively with functions which may include financial supervision, policy formulation, public relations, capital planning and staff appointments.

Accountability

A discussion paper on evaluation and accountability in government schools was developed and distributed. A key assumption of the paper was that public accountability should flow from an acceptance of responsibility for internal evaluation or 'quality assurance', which should be embedded within school planning cycles and the whole system.

In the Catholic sector, as well as meeting the accountability requirements of outside agencies such as the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training, two specific programs for improvement in teaching

and learning activities were formulated. The Development and Evaluation Program for Principals, formally commenced in 1991, offered school leaders support and feedback in their demanding roles. A specially appointed consultant was engaged to manage the program. The second program, on teacher appraisal, was also trialled late in 1991. It aims to give teachers regular opportunities to reflect on their professional progress and to plan for future directions.

Issues affecting quality schooling

Population distribution

Tasmania has a largely non-urban population living in scattered communities. This causes ongoing difficulties in providing a high-quality education service to government and non-government schools throughout the State. This is particularly so in secondary education, where there is a large proportion of small schools, and in special education, where numbers of students with special needs live in isolated areas.

Attitudinal/perception data

A major attitudinal change towards college education has occurred over the last few years. Throughout the State there has been an increasing awareness of the need for students to remain at school until the end of year 12 and, as a result, retention rates from school (year 10) to college (year 11) have increased dramatically.

Regular contact with the Tasmanian Council of State Schools Parents and Friends Association continued to provide the department with community perception on a range of matters and the establishment of school councils will further facilitate this process.

The Tasmanian Education Council, which comprises parents, educators and people from industry and business, advises the Minister and as such is a vehicle for conveying community attitudes on education. In 1991 it obtained and provided data from a number of sources, including a questionnaire placed in newspapers, for a proposed policy on literacy. It also advised the Minister that parents had become increasingly aware of inequities in the existing current student admission policy and that there was strong community support for change.

Similar consultative structures exist for Catholic schools through the Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission which advises the Archbishop of Hobart on a range of policy matters, and the Association of Parents and Friends of Catholic Schools, whose members are very active in promoting the welfare of schools.

Equity initiatives

As stated in the Strategic Plan, the department is committed to a social justice approach to policy development in order to provide improved access to quality education for those students who in the past have not traditionally benefited. This approach includes the use of positive discrimination of resources in favour of educationally disadvantaged groups.

Distance education

The School of Distance Education aims to overcome potential educational disadvantage by providing programs for students unable to attend another school or college. It also provides programs in particular subjects for students in those schools that cannot offer such programs.

During 1991 the interactive use of computers for teaching languages other than English was trialled in those schools where qualified language teachers were not available. Its popularity outstripped expectations and will be expanded in 1992 to include a 'taster' course in Japanese for over 200 students from a district high school in years 7 and 8.

A tutor program was funded from the Students at Risk Program. Students most at risk were identified and mentors employed for them. Outcomes were highly encouraging. Of the 11 year 10 students involved, 10 of them at the end of 1991 decided to proceed on to year 11.

Country Areas Program

A joint government non-government program, the Country Areas Program provides funds to 15 cluster groups involving 44 schools. It addresses isolation through clustering, sharing of resources and creating imaginative use of the expertise of local community members. Area or cluster committees have strong community representation and are involved in school decision making, preparing and approving submissions and organising community search days.

The major central initiative for 1991 was a Statewide conference focusing on student retention to year 12. Two projects operating in the north-east of the State at Winnaleah, St Helens and St Marys employ home–school liaison officers with a brief to improve parent and student attitudes to continuing education to year 12. The increase in retention rates from these schools in 1991 suggests that the program and these officers are already experiencing success.

The conference also reported on successful programs based on artists in residence, cultural and social awareness, nature trails, music and the marine science laboratory.

Disadvantaged Schools Program

During 1991 the 96 government schools declared disadvantaged, developed programs designed to bring about whole-school change. School committees continued to be given a primary task in this process by ensuring programs addressed local needs and related closely to the life experience of the students.

An important central initiative in 1991 was the production *Winners*, a magazine which highlights successful projects under the Disadvantaged Schools Program umbrella.

An example of one such project was at Riana Primary School in the north-west of the State in the area of educational kinesiology (whole-brain learning). Under the guidance of professionals, the parents, teachers and students worked together to overcome, through educational kinesiology, identified disadvantage. So successful was the program that it will be extended to other schools in the area in 1992.

Positive outcomes of the Disadvantaged Schools Program included:

- increased cooperation and understanding between the school and parents;
- better coordination, concentration and vitality of students;
- improved learning attitudes, especially in language;
- enhanced self-esteem of many students.

The Disadvantaged Schools Program is the only program in Tasmania under which individual classroom teachers can apply for funding up to $1,500 to conduct action research projects. Over 50 such projects were conducted in 1991 and many schools have adopted them as part of their normal program. Some were highlighted in *Winners* and include such diversity as science on the farm, a reading club, collaborative arts, philosophy for children, media studies and a student mediator program.

During 1991 an in-service program for home–school liaison officers gave opportunities to share concerns and to provide training in interpersonal skills. A video highlighting successful practices and strategies in developing a supportive school environment program was also produced.

Catholic schools

Program initiatives in the five declared disadvantaged schools focused on personal development and self-esteem, computer-assisted learning, literacy and numeracy skills, outdoor education and cultural experiences. Essential learning resources were provided to assist in these areas, as well as in science, social science and manual arts.

The availability of these resources made possible the development of more stimulating curricula. For example, the purchase of a lathe for one disadvantaged school in an industrial township made machining experience available for both male and female students in secondary classes. Program support of an outdoor education program involving two schools on the program, and other schools serving areas of socioeconomic disadvantage, assisted the development of a course to foster leadership traits in students.

Parents were involved in planning and decision making at both school and State committee levels.

A part-time coordinator was employed at system level, but over 86 per cent of the total grants were appropriated to school projects.

Students at Risk Program in government schools

In 1991 four colleges and ten schools participated in the program.

A survey of the program conducted by the University of Tasmania highlighted the following positive outcomes:

- improved retention figures from schools to colleges;
- measurable attitude changes in parents, students and staff;
- validation of the needs of students at risk;
- structural and support changes within the schools and colleges to cater for such students.

In particular, the role of the home–school liaison officer was acknowledged and, as a result, a similar project to the Country Areas Program will be trialled in 1992.

Literacy and Learning Program

The Centre for Advanced Teaching Studies coordinates both the National and General elements of the Literacy and Learning Program.

During 1991 the national component, in association with a project group from Western Australia, developed a workshop program titled Creating Communities of Literate Thinkers. The program is designed to contribute to the national effort and will be considered for publication by Curriculum Corporation.

At the State level, the workshop program has been implemented with the most disadvantaged secondary schools throughout the State. It involves 32 government schools and two Catholic schools. Additional programs have been developed for implementation in 1992, including a key teacher program and a year 7 intensive reading support program, using volunteers as tutors.

Education of students from non-English speaking backgrounds

The English as a Second Language Program (ESL), which is made up of the General Support element and the New Arrivals element, provided 27 specialist staff for English language support for 300 non-English speaking background children in 58 schools during 1991.

Tasmania's unique immigration pattern (60 per cent of newly arrived migrant children in 1991 held refugee status) means resources are severely stretched. The largest ethnic group of children (55 per cent) supported by the program belong to the Hmong community and most of these children are pre-literate on initial enrolment.

Peer support and peer tutoring are important strategies employed in schools for newly arrived children and participation in school sports is actively fostered as a means of increasing understanding and friendship.

ESL teachers maintain close links with parents as well as with migrant service providers. Teachers in 1991 arranged information sessions on nutrition and dental health as well as more directly related educational matters such as progress reports, school camps and home programs in reading and homework.

Catholic schools

The General Support element assisted students who met the Commonwealth criteria and were identified by schools as needing help with English language proficiency. Priority was given to providing specialist school-level support for identified students.

Assistance was provided to 79 male and 53 female students in primary classes, and to 43 male and 22 female students in secondary classes, a total of 197 students in 18 schools.

The New Arrivals element assisted eight male primary students in four schools through the provision of intensive school-based instruction in English. None of the students assisted was classed as refugees.

Aboriginal education

A concerted effort was made to fill a number of staff positions related to Aboriginal education in government schools. By the end of 1991 selections had been made so that resource teachers, a student retention officer and additional home–school liaison officers would be in place by 1992.

Increasing numbers of parents are sending their children to preschools. In 1991 there were 140 aboriginal children enrolled in kindergarten and early transition classes. The Special Assistance Program provided support for 143 primary school students and 152 were assisted by the Aboriginal Student Development Program, which provides tutorial assistance.

Eighty-one aboriginal students were enrolled in year 11 and 45 in year 12.

Mobility is a feature of Aboriginal families and at times this makes it difficult to give effective assistance.

Catholic schools

The Aboriginal Education Program was initiated in 1991. A part-time consultant was employed to provide in-service for teachers of Aboriginal students, and to raise awareness of Aboriginal education among all schools and teachers. Some 460 teachers were contacted by the consultant in the sensitising phase, and 40 teachers representing 18 schools attended regional in-service days. A collection of resources available for borrowing by schools was commenced.

One hundred and forty-four Aboriginal students were enrolled in Catholic schools in 1991.

Independent schools

Funding received under the Aboriginal Education Program has enabled the commencement of a process of funding a number of initiatives generally aimed at improving awareness and sensitivity to Aboriginal issues of non-Aboriginal students and teachers. Aboriginal students enrolled in schools will also benefit from this program.

Special education

For funding purposes in Tasmania, special needs students fall into two groups. The first is a small group with physical, sensory and significant intellectual disabilities. Special education funding is allocated to such students. However, the vast majority of special needs students fall into the second group. These are those students who have difficulties with schooling to a greater or lesser degree, but do not have disabilities that are immediately apparent. Each school in 1991 was expected to show in its school plan for 1992 that there was positive discrimination of funding towards this second group from the school resource package.

The Claremont Program fully integrates deaf children into the life of the school and recognises the deaf community as a distinct culture with its own language, Auslan. It provides for students from kindergarten to year 12 at Claremont Primary School, Claremont High School and Claremont College. In 1991, 31 students were enrolled in the program.

Staff involved in the project believe the aim of integration is not to make disabled people 'normal' but to allow them the same opportunities and choices as their non-disabled peers.

Evaluation of the project in 1991 concluded that the deaf students have made significant academic progress and that their social and personal skills had developed dramatically — they are no longer passive observers but active, confident learners. As the photograph indicates, they have made firm friends, both deaf and hearing.

(Photo courtesy *The Mercury*, Hobart)

The year 1991 was a key restructuring year for special education. Each district was given a special school allocation that was to be adapted to district needs. One district chose to abolish its special school and to utilise staffing resources in a model which supported students with special needs in regular schools. In another, where a special school and a primary school combine on the same campus, a highly successful innovation saw two teachers team-teaching a regular class and a special education class in the same room.

Provision was made in 1991 to increase special education staffing across the State and, in the process, to redress existing inequities. State coordinators were appointed for early intervention, visual impairment and hearing impairment and at the same time all guidance officers, speech pathologists and social workers became school based.

A resource folder, *Student Support*, distributed to schools during the year, was in high demand because of its 'usefulness'. The folder brought together the resources, information, publications and policies which are available to assist schools and colleges in the task of providing support for the personal and social development of students.

In 1991 Tasmania became involved in a project of national significance that is investigating the professional development needs of teachers in regular schools where special education students are integrated.

All elements of the special education programs operate in Tasmania: Recurrent and Integration Grants, Children in Residential Care, Children with Severe Disabilities and Early Special Education. Except for the Recurrent and Integration Grants element, they are joint government–non-government programs.

Catholic schools

Projects aided by the School Support Non-Government element were:

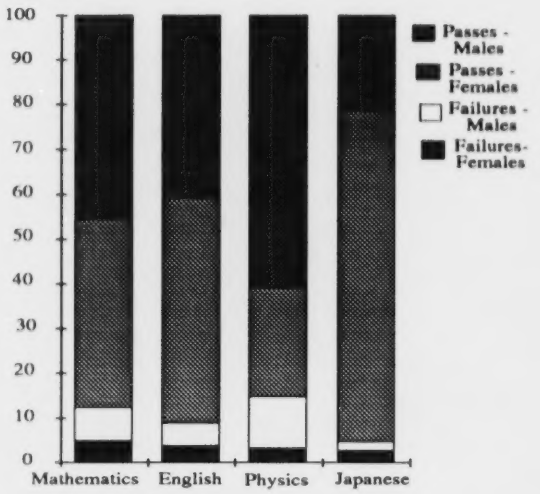
- provision of teacher, teacher aide and/or equipment;
- support for 32 students with disabilities integrated into regular schools. The range of disabilities included intellectual and sensory disabilities, and physical disabilities such as spastic quadriplegia, chronic polyneuropathy and arm deformity;
- a support service for hearing-impaired students and their families;
- seminars for parents of students with disabilities to increase their knowledge of, and facility with, the use of appropriate information technology.

In addition, collaboration between the Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania and the Catholic Education Office made available to all non-government schools:

- a consultant to provide advice about the needs of students with disabilities;
- guidance officers to assist in the assessment of students with disabilities.

Educational provisions for girls

Figure 2. HSC results, selected subjects, 1991



Source: Department of Education and the Arts, Tasmania

Females represent 52.2 per cent of the total Higher School Certificate student population in 1991. Figure 2 indicates that:

- they are under-represented in mathematics, very over-represented in Japanese, very under-represented in physics and slightly over-represented in English;
- in all subjects, females have a significantly better pass rate than males — and they also have a higher percentage of credits and higher passes.

A revised policy statement on gender equity and a parent statement were developed in 1991. The policy outlined the framework for an action plan required at all levels of the system. It is based on the four objectives of the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools.

In 1991 about half the schools nominated gender-equity coordinators. District meetings were arranged to provide coordinators with information and resources and to give them the opportunity to hear about a range of programs underway in schools.

The programs included:

- 'taster' courses for girls in non-traditional subjects at the colleges and TAFE;
- a computed-aided design course run at a college for girls from a feeder primary school;
- a careers poster encouraging girls to broaden their post-school options;
- careers sessions for students;
- procedures to deal with sex-based harassment;
- Lego technic programs for primary school girls;
- a review of library books and classroom materials for gender-inclusive content;
- single-sex groupings for some activities and subjects;
- awareness-raising activities for staff and parent groups on gender equity.

All curriculum officers were involved in a seminar on gender-inclusive curriculum, which included workshops on the major strands and issues in the development of gender-inclusive curriculum.

A group of senior staff memebers completed a two-year project which aimed to develop performance indicators for gender-equity programs in schools.

A booklet for course developers for the Tasmanian Certificate of Education was developed and included a range of ideas related to gender inclusive curriculum. Issues discussed included the need for:

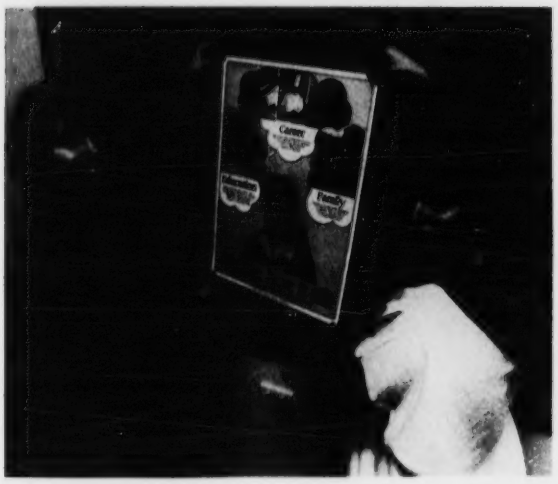
- males and females to have equal representation in pictures, written examples and use of personal pronouns;
- teachers to be sensitive to the particular needs and learning styles of girls and boys;
- teachers to use a variety of reporting techniques.

Staff-development sessions were held for schools and various associations during the year and a wide range of resources on gender-equity issues was purchased for library use.

Catholic schools

All schools in the system focus on ways in which school life enhances the dignity of the human person, regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic background or disability. This is the context for Catholic education: realisation of the worth of the whole person as a valued individual.

Two Catholic schools, a large coeducational secondary school and a disadvantaged primary school, were included in visits by consultants conducting the review into the National Policy on the Education of Girls in Australian Schools. In each case a group of about twenty girls took part in lively discussions with the consultant.



Claremont College, like other colleges throughout the State, demonstrates a continued commitment to equal opportunity. During 1991 the college initiated a project to ensure greater awareness of career pathways for girls. Activities included presentation breakfasts, career afternoons, 'taster' courses in non-traditional areas for girls from associate high schools and the production of a poster. The poster, with its theme 'You can have it all', encouraged girls to consider careers in fields where job demand is high and to consider mixing marriage and career.

Positive outcomes included increased awareness among staff and students of a wider range of career pathways, the strengthening of links with associate high schools and increased community awareness of the issues.

General and vocational education

Response to the Finn Report

Tasmania supports the notion that the school curriculum should be more applied but is concerned that those students who seem to have difficulty making the transition from school to work may become further disadvantaged. There is also concern at the lack of recognition in the report of major curriculum and assessment changes which have already occurred in Tasmania through the development of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education. These changes include the inclusion of competencies into syllabuses, the more applied nature of syllabuses and the criterion-based assessment processes.

The following questions were raised at the end of 1991:

- If the competencies are cross-curricular, who will assess them and how?
- How practicable will implementation be if there are too many strands which could overwhelm teachers and students?

- When will students be reported upon and who will be the audience?
- How do the Finn competencies mesh with the Australian Education Council profiles, the National Training Board standards and the Tasmanian Certificate of Education subject criteria?
- How can teachers' judgements be validated?
- Because of the resourcing and staff development implications, can the changes recommended by the Finn Report be adequately resourced?

Catholic and other non-government school authorities have worked closely with the department in responding to the issues raised by the Finn Report, as well as liaising with their national bodies.

Changing arrangements for post-compulsory schooling

At the end of 1991, Tasmania believes it is in a good position for development in 1992 because:

- its college structure supports the adult learning environment outlined in the Finn Report;
- its syllabuses for years 11 and 12 (prepared in 1991 for implementation in 1992) provide pathways of learning for all students, have an applied focus and contain assessment processes that are criterion-based.

Initiatives in career education

The Job and Course Explorer database was a major priority in 1991 and will be fully operational in 1992. Licences for the national database were negotiated and it is expected that it will come on line early in 1993.

Tasmania participated in the development of the national policy on career education, which will form the basis of a State policy. It also participated in the national project of the Industrial Relations Education Committee that aims to provide students with an understanding of industrial relations. As a pilot State for the project, in 1991 Tasmania prepared resources and trained industrial relations personnel in classroom procedures.

Other State initiatives included preparatory work for the proposed review of work experience and work on a feasibility study into careers guidance systems.

School–TAFE links

A credit transfer policy was developed during 1991 to provide two-way credit transfer between the college sector and the Training Division of the Department of Employment, Industrial Relations and Training or training providers recognised by the Training Authority of Tasmania. Credit will operate between the Tasmanian Certificate of Education syllabuses and relevant subjects for a range of vocational education and training award courses from operative through to para-professional.

The policy was developed by representatives from industry, the Department of Education and the Arts, the Schools Board of Tasmania, the Training Division of the Department of Employment, Industrial Relations and Training and the Training Authority of Tasmania. It was endorsed by the Minister for Education and the Arts in August.

A credit-transfer coordinating committee consisting of representatives from the Department of Education and the Arts, the Department of Employment, Industrial Relations and Training, the Schools Board of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Confederation of Industries was established to identify priority areas for 1992 and to oversee the implementation of the policy

Transition from education to tertiary education data

In Tasmania there is still a significant number of year 12 students who are qualified to enter a higher education institution but do not do so. In 1989, for example, 46 per cent of qualified year 12 students failed to enrol in a higher education institution in the year following their qualification. However, many of these may enrol at a later date, as up to 50 per cent of commencing higher education enrolments each year are from non-school leavers.

Data shows that 48.8 per cent of 1990 year 12 school leavers were enrolled either full-time (higher education or TAFE) or part-time (TAFE) in education courses in Tasmania in 1991. Data from previous years suggests that a further 16 per cent of the 1990 year 12 leavers could be expected to enrol in higher education courses in 1992 or 1993.

Areas of student learning

Government schools

Significant activities in areas of student learning at both the State and Commonwealth level included:

- release of the primary education policy document *Our Children: The Future*;
- further development of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) syllabuses;
- work at the Commonwealth level;
- work on State priorities.

Release of the primary education policy document, *Our Children: The Future*

Consisting of five booklets, entitled *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, *Teaching and Learning*, *A Curriculum for Children*, *Successful Schools* and *Monitoring and Assessing Children's Learning*, the primary education policy

provides clear direction for education in primary schools and stresses the interventionist role of the teacher. It links with the secondary education policy document *Secondary Education: The Future* and indeed, its influence in the area of teaching and learning is impacting on high school classrooms.

The policy genuinely recognises the differences between children and, in order to cope with those differences, teachers are required to have a wide repertoire of teaching, learning and assessment practices. As a consequence, teachers will adopt a range of teaching styles according to the individual needs of their students.

The final booklet, *Monitoring and Assessing Children's Learning*, acknowledges the need for clearly stated outcomes. It emphasises the teacher's responsibility to monitor and assess children's progress systematically in all areas of the curriculum.

Implementation of the primary school policy document Our Children: The Future *will result in increased teaching and learning effectiveness. The document stresses the systematic monitoring and assessment by teachers of children's progress with the consequent requirement that teachers 'take action to ensure that everything possible is done to promote learning and extend progress'* (Monitoring and Assessing Children's Learning, *page 39*) .

Further development of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) syllabuses

Implementation of *Secondary Education: The Future* continued with the development of Tasmanian Certificate of Education syllabuses for years 11 and 12 and the modification and consolidation of syllabuses for years 9 and 10.

The Tasmanian Certificate of Education is issued by the Schools Board of Tasmania. It is a single new certificate with criterion-based assessment procedures showing students' achievements from year 9 until they leave school. Currently in the process of being phased in, it will replace the two previous certificates, the School Certificate (for year 10 leavers) and the Higher School Certificate (for year 11 and 12 leavers).

In 1991 the Tasmanian Certificate of Education entered its second phase of implementation with its introduction into year 10. During the year, syllabuses for years 11 and 12 were written and course materials prepared in readiness for year 11 students in 1992. A feature of all syllabuses is their applied nature and the provision of learning pathways for all students.

Under the Tasmanian Certificate of Education all years 9 and 10 subjects and most year 11 subjects are internally assessed by the schools and monitored by the Schools Board of Tasmania through moderation. All year 12 subjects will be assessed by a combination of moderated school assessments and external assessment procedures carried out by the Schools Board. Some year 11 subjects will also include external assessment.

Syllabuses designed to help students prepare for entry into TAFE will be considered during 1992 for accreditation towards subsequent TAFE qualifications. For students wishing to enter tertiary institutions, over 40 syllabuses were approved in 1991 by the University of Tasmania for entry in 1993.

All systems have been jointly involved in syllabus development and designing assessment procedures.

Work at the Commonwealth level

With the establishment of the Australian Education Council areas of learning, national links were strengthened during 1991, particularly in the areas of mathematics and English, where national collaborative curricula were developed. In the area of technology, Tasmania took major responsibility for preparation of the national statement.

Work on State priorities

There was a range of State priorities, including kindergarten to year 8 guidelines in science and mathematics, a focus on supportive school environment and further development of records of achievement.

The number of schools wishing to participate in supportive school environment increased dramatically. Aimed at developing strategies for the positive management of student behaviour, supportive school environment was most successful in those schools where the principal and senior staff showed total commitment to the concept.

The policy on records of achievement continued to be implemented and indicators were developed to determine the progress of each school towards achieving policy goals. All students in year 10 produced records which will be a valuable resource for those leaving school and also for those making the transition to college in 1992.

In 1991 work began on records of development for primary school students.

English

Through consultation, Tasmania is actively involved in the development of the national statement on English. A State reference group has been established for the purpose of ensuring that the statement outlines a curriculum that is accessible to all students and links teaching practice to desired student outcomes across the years of schooling. Tasmania has direct representation in the development of the national profile. Work at the national level will have a profound influence on the development in 1992 of a continuous framework for the teaching of English from kindergarten to year 12.

The policy document *Our Children: The Future* also provides a further major influence, with its emphasis on outcomes and its articulation of the interventionist role of the teacher in achieving such outcomes.

Work commenced on a discussion paper on the teaching of reading and writing which, when completed in 1992, will form a basis for a new State policy on literacy. Direct input from the community into the discussion paper was provided through the Tasmanian Education Council.

Another major priority in 1991 was the preparation of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education syllabuses and courses in English for years 11 and 12.

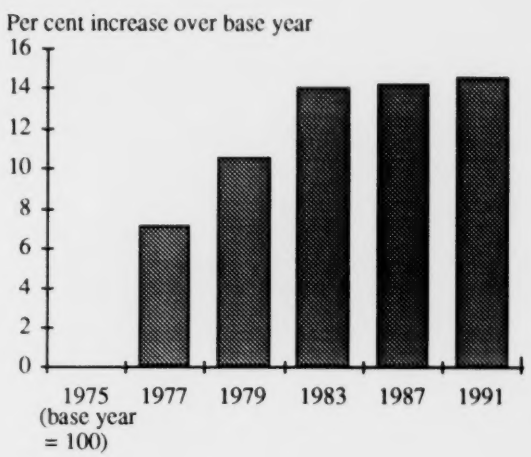
English is taught in heterogeneous groups to year 9 and many students are taught heterogeneously to the end of years 10 or 11, with teachers making provision through collaborative negotiated learning for the needs of individual students. Teachers recognise the centrality of literacy in all learning and individual schools and clusters continue to work to strengthen literacy in all curriculum areas. The Commonwealth Literacy and Learning Program (junior secondary) focuses specifically on literacy across the curriculum.

Literacy testing

Literacy testing for all students aged 10 and 14 has been conducted by the department for all government schools since 1975. From the early 1980s, this testing has been undertaken on a four-year cycle with a different age group or skill area (or both) being tested each year. Schools of the Catholic education system also participate in the program but their results are recorded separately.

In 1991 the reading test for 14-year-olds (14R) was administered. Using 100 as the norm, the performance trend over the six years in which a 14R test has been given is summarised in Figure 3. Indices are derived using a chaining method based on the test items in common between consecutive pairs of years.

Figure 3. Student performance trend—14R test, 1975–91



Source: Department of Education and the Arts, Tasmania

While the performance of 14-year-old students has continued to improve, Figure 3 indicates a longitudinal trend with two distinct phases. Between 1975 and 1983 there were a series of marked, statistically significant improvements in performance. In 1983 a relative plateau was reached and, although a trend indicating a slight improvement appears to have continued since then, the changes have been too small to be statistically significant.

Significant differences amongst various categories of schools were found. Amongst these were:

- schools in urban centres and large towns (all categorised as high schools) generally performed considerably better than schools in small rural centres (categorised as district high schools);
- schools classified as being disadvantaged did not perform as well as the other schools;
- large schools (over 600 students) and medium-sized schools (200–600 students) both performed markedly better than small schools (those with less than 200 students), with the best results generally being obtained by the large schools;
- a strong association was found to exist between the performance of a school and the socioeconomic status of its neighbourhood, with those in high socioeconomic areas generally registering the best performances and those in low socioeconomic areas usually having the poorest performances (and schools in moderate areas had intermediate performances).

There was a significant difference in the performance of the girls. Their performance (mean score = 37.3/47, N = 2,110) was markedly better than that of the boys (mean score = 34.7/47, N = 2,253).

Languages other than English

The percentage of students studying languages other than English remained constant at a little over 30 per cent of total enrolments in government secondary schools and colleges. Indonesian had the greatest increase with a rise of 20 per cent in enrolments, while the number studying Japanese continued to increase steadily to 26 per cent of those students taking a language other than English.

There was almost an even balance in the teaching of European and Asian languages, with a large predominance of 'taster' courses being offered.

A policy review of languages other than English is planned for 1992 which will make particular reference to primary school language learning. It will also focus on the need to cater for all students to take a language other than English at some stage in their education.

Issues include:

- the varying amount of time given to languages other than English by schools:
- the low percentage of district high school students studying a language, although the potential, referred to previously, for teaching languages other than English through distance education classes is being successfully trialled;
- the large number of students doing 'taster' courses who do then not continue with language study;
- the concentration of Indonesian teaching in the north of the State and Japanese in the south;
- the low proportion of males studying a language other than English.

Syllabus and course development for years 11 and 12 was the 1991 priority. By offering an accelerated syllabus for beginners as well as more advanced syllabuses, all students are able to take a language other than English at college level.

The area of languages other than English learning is one where there exists very close collaboration between the systems in terms of information sharing and mutual cooperation.

Science

As well as contributing to the national statement, the main work was in writing year 11 and 12 syllabuses. The range of these syllabuses provide opportunities for all students to study science. In applied science, for example, the emphasis is on historical, societal, cultural and philosophical elements, while the project science syllabus allows students to work on a year-long project.

The trialling of applied sciences in one college during 1991 indicated the potential for opening up science to all students. In the trialling college, where the total student enrolment is one-third that of any of the other colleges, there were three times more students enrolled in science.

Electronics has also been given a practical orientation and caters for students with a range of abilities. During 1991, with syllabuses written for years 11 and 12, a coherent electronics program was put in place for students from year 9 to year 12.

Technology

Technology was given a higher profile in 1991 with its recognition in the policy document, *Our Children: The Future* as a new field of learning from kindergarten to year 12. Previously known as Materials, Design and Technology, it now incorporates a range of designing, making and appraising and provides the broadest possible context for students to meet challenges, solve problems and extend their capabilities. Appropriately, the emphasis on assessment has changed to design process, design principles, technological change and cooperative learning.

During 1991 design graphics replaced technical drawing. Computer-aided design was given prominence by making it a compulsory element in all drawing syllabuses and by the production of a year 11 syllabus which is totally computer-aided design.

With the completion of syllabuses for years 11 and 12, there is now a continuity of approach from years 9 to 12. The range of syllabuses is extensive and includes those for special education where the focus has changed from the traditional 'coffee table' exercise to self-help, such as home maintenance.

In order to encourage females, workshops for teachers were run that focused on gender-inclusive design challenges.

Developing resources and providing professional development in the new field of study became a priority during the year. Resources such as *DATA Starter* (kindergarten to year 8) encouraged groups of students to undertake a range of design challenges within short time frames using recycled materials. A design workshop for teachers organised through the Royal Australian Institute of Architects was indicative of an innovative approach.

Technology was one area in particular where a number of Catholic schools invested significant capital expenditure during 1991, both in terms of new buildings and facilities, and the provision of upgraded equipment.

Mathematics

During 1991 Tasmania participated nationally in the project team, the reference group, the profile project and the Chance and Data project. This involvement was reflected

directly in years 11 and 12 syllabus writing and also in the kindergarten to year 8 guidelines, which are to be released in 1992. It is planned to incorporate the national profiles into the guidelines in order to provide them with a greater emphasis on learning outcomes.

While there is heterogeneous mathematics grouping in primary schools, generally in larger high schools, teaching is in homogeneous groups. Emphasis, in keeping with the more applied nature of the syllabuses, has started to shift from absolute dominance of skill development to a context that is relevant to students' experiences and interests.

Changes occurring in mathematics are significant. Much of the professional development is occurring through the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers which, during 1991, produced a background information kit for consultants and key teachers.

Student talent continued to be encouraged by the Tasmanian Mathematics Teachers Association through an annual four-day talent camp which is endorsed by the department and sponsored by Comalco. A focus on special education was an important development with new syllabuses covering years 9 to 12.

One issue that still has not been fully addressed is the use of technology in teaching mathematics.

Catholic schools

Presentation and dissemination of the national mathematics statement also took place in Catholic schools, assisted by Commonwealth funding through the National Catholic Education Commission. This publication has provided a useful framework for curriculum development and evaluation at all levels.

At the primary level a fairly exhaustive examination was undertaken of student outcomes at 10 years of age. It led to a refocusing of priorities, content and skills, as well as a commitment to ongoing evaluation of programs in this subject area.

Studies of society and environment

In Tasmania this learning area is referred to as both social science and studies in society.

The national mapping exercise was completed in 1991 and new directions will follow from ongoing national collaboration.

In 1991 this area was not funded as high priority. Several new programs resulted from collaboration with other government departments and non-government agencies, such as Freedom from Hunger and the Australian Electoral Commission.

A range of syllabuses for years 11 and 12 was written, including those for special education. New syllabuses are significantly different, particularly because of their stated criteria for assessing student performance. Criteria usually include subject knowledge, enquiry skills and collaborative decision-making skills.

Work-related studies, while occupying a separate learning area in Tasmania, for the purposes of this chapter can be grouped under studies of society and the environment. Work-related studies include business studies, home economics, student enterprise, a number of work-related subjects and career education.

A massive upgrading to computers in business studies and associated professional development for teachers were major initiatives during 1991. Other initiatives included the development of retailing as a new subject for the Tasmanian Certificate of Education and the acceptance of the tourism studies and catering syllabuses for accreditation by the Australian Hospitality Review Panel.

The arts

This learning area, comprising music, dance, drama, media, and art, craft and design, aims that all students should have access to the arts and be able to celebrate them through public performance, exhibitions and student enterprise projects.

A major purpose in writing the syllabuses for years 11 and 12 was to remove elitism, often associated with the area. The resulting syllabuses provide students with a range of experiences, new technologies and an awareness of the arts in the broadest sense. Emphasis is on applied assessment and peer assessment is also encouraged. Syllabuses for students with special needs were also incorporated into the overall structure.

The Artist in Residence Project, with 12 based in schools throughout the State, was again highly successful. Jointly funded by the department and the Australia Council, the proposed withdrawal of funding by the council in 1992 raises the issue of the project's future. Evidence suggests that those students who become involved in the project continue involvement with the arts after they leave school.

Achieving excellence in music continued to be encouraged through secondary music scholarships.

Health

The components of this learning area are health education, physical education and outdoor education.

Health education is compulsory for all years of study from kindergarten to year 10, with appropriate health programs offered to students in years 11 and 12. All schools in 1991 had a detailed policy on the implementation of health education and all had health coordinators supported by specialist health educators.

The major thrust in 1991 was to ensure that the teacher was the focus of the overall program, with the work of other groups and agencies playing a supportive role. This process provides students with a coherent health message as

well as optimising opportunities for teachers to have an impact on student decision making and the development of positive attitudes.

Professional development for teachers in human sexuality, including STDs and HIV/AIDS, from kindergarten to year 12, remained a focus and workshops were carried out in conjunction with the Department of Health. The Medical Benefits Fund sponsored a protective behaviours program.

Tasmania has specialist physical educators in approximately 90 per cent of its primary schools. All have a compulsory swimming and water safety program for years 3 and 4.

The place of sport in the school curriculum continues to be debated. With much of secondary school sport occurring out of school hours, many teachers find it increasingly difficult to find time to organise and coach. A move during 1991 towards joint ownership of junior sport between the local community and the school, together with more defined pathways from junior to senior sport, should help resolve the issue.

A major emphasis has been in the development of syllabuses in all areas of health for years 11 and 12. Syllabuses cover the full range of student ability.

Catholic Schools

During 1991 Catholic schools built upon the previous two years of intense activity of their program, Christian Education for Personal Development. The program has sought to integrate developments, particularly in AIDS education, into the Christian context and in the process has collaborated with other instrumentalities, including the Department of Education and the Arts.

Teaching and learning

Aspects affecting the quality of teaching

Recruitment and selection

The number of teachers recruited in 1991 was approximately 190, in order to compensate for a wastage rate of approximately 3 per cent and increasing enrolments.

Most teachers were recruited in the areas of generalist primary, special education, mathematics and English. The quality of applicants was good and remuneration was in accordance with qualifications and experience.

The policy on selection was rationalised so that it accorded more closely with established State Service procedures. At the same time, there was stricter application of all existing policies because of the State's continuing budgetary restrictions.

Remuneration

During 1991 the adjudication of teacher salaries and conditions before the Industrial Commission continued. The first part of the case was heard in May, continued to adjournment at the end of the year, and will be re-opened in 1992. The teachers' case is seen as an application for national benchmark salaries.

Negotiations with teacher unions continued in 1991 on issues of mobility procedures, school teaching, staff configurations and the classification of special school principal positions.

As part of the Structural Efficiency Principle, the department and teacher unions agreed that teachers would undertake appraisal in return for salary increases. In the latter part of 1991 the department consulted with union representatives with a view to a systemwide comprehensive teacher appraisal policy. It is anticipated appraisal will undergo trial implementation in 1992 with a view to full implementation in 1993.

Catholic schools

The year 1991 was a year of intense activity in the restructuring of the Catholic Education Agreement (Catholic Education Award from December 1991) and the establishment of a simplified salary structure and a framework for positions of responsibility. Broad parameters for Advanced Skills Teachers positions were established.

In the area of improving teacher competence and confidence, award restructuring and progress towards the national benchmark has begun to provide a more defined set of career opportunities for teachers and better rewards for competence and ongoing upgrading of skills and qualifications.

Developments associated with teachers and teaching

Equal employment opportunity

Dissemination sessions for the 1991–92 Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan, the policy statement and a sex-based harassment pamphlet were held across the agency around the State. Personnel policies were reviewed to ensure that they incorporated equal employment opportunity principles.

The National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning

Tasmania is a participant in this project, which commenced early in 1991. Preparatory work on its action research project, the National Schools Project, began late in 1991. Tasmanian schools were selected and their projects will investigate how changes to work organisations can lead to improved student learning outcomes.

Staff development

The Staff Development Section was established in 1991 as part of the restructured Human Resources Branch. The

section's role is to provide training and development services for non-teaching personnel that will develop these competencies related to the achievement of corporate objectives.

Teacher development

During 1991 the Centre for Advanced Teaching Studies managed a series of study groups through which teachers addressed a range of professional and research issues associated with their teaching. The focus for study groups was in the areas of teachers and teaching, children and learning, parents and the community, retention, and school effectiveness.

Short courses for teachers and administrators were offered in many areas. A series of workshops and breakfast sessions developed around the theme of self-management were run. Some 20 of these participants are carrying the activity through to higher degree study.

Catholic schools

Late in 1991 a pilot program of teacher appraisal was launched involving some 60 teachers. The program aims to test a methodology, developed locally, for growth in teacher confidence and for planning future professional directions.

Teacher development activities continue to be primarily directed, from the resources of the system, towards improving teachers' professional background in religious education. An intensive eight-day leadership course was also provided for about 35 teachers.

Independent schools

Discussions were commenced in 1991 to establish a consortium for professional development in liaison with the University of Tasmania. It is planned that this will provide improved access for teachers in independent schools to high-quality professional development activities that are targeted to their specific needs.

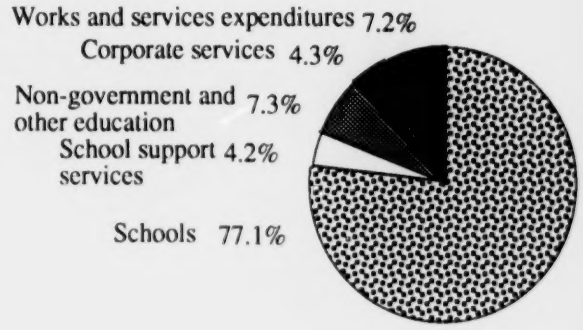
Resourcing schools

Recurrent and capital resources

A total of $304 million was expended on government schools in Tasmania in 1990–91. Of this, $282 million was used for recurrent purposes and $22 million for projects of a capital nature. This is over $50 million less than the 1989–90 expenditure and is a result of the government achieving the cost-saving initiatives listed in the 1990 *National Report*.

Further advances towards school-based management were made during 1991. About 85 per cent of the non-salary recurrent funds for the operation of schools are allocated by the school resource package and are managed by schools.

Figure 4. Expenditure by major programs, 1990–91



Source: Department of Education and the Arts, Tasmania

Entrepreneurial initiatives

Overseas marketing of educational services

The marketing of Tasmanian educational services continued, involving government, Catholic and independent schools, TAFE, the Maritime College and the University of Tasmania.

The number of students continued to increase with most coming from Malaysia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand. In 1991 an increasing number of students came from the Pacific Islands. It is estimated that the program in 1991 was worth $10 million to the State's economy.

During the year, legislation to formalise registration of both institutions/providers and courses received royal assent.

Hiring school facilities

A policy to approve schools hiring out facilities at a market rental and retaining the finance received, rather then returning it to consolidated revenue, was developed but did not receive final approval during 1991. However, arrangements were made to hire out two of the student hostels by a commercial enterprise during the 1991–92 summer vacation for use as a backpackers' hostel. As a result the hostels concerned directly received $5,000, which will benefit student accommodation in those hostels in 1992.

Sponsorship policy

A discussion paper was distributed widely and, from the responses received, a number of policy options were developed. Further activity is planned in 1992 through participation on the Australian Education Council Working Party on commercial sponsorship and promotion in schools.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

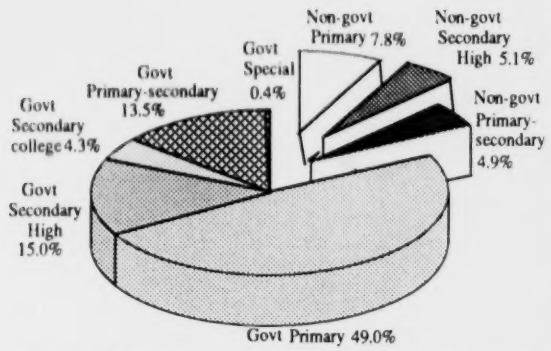
Structure and operation of school system

The Northern Territory, with an initial population census count of 175,253 people (1991) and a land area of 1,348,000 square kilometres, has a population density of approximately one person per 8 square kilometres. Educational services are provided to a diverse multicultural and multilingual population which is scattered over an area 30 per cent larger than the combined areas of New South Wales and Victoria. Most of the population live in the major townships of Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy and Jabiru, with the remainder widely dispersed across the Northern Territory. Many smaller centres are accessible only by air or by sea, and are often not accessible during the wet season. It is important to note that 53 per cent of Northern Territory schools and 24 per cent of the students are located in remote areas.

An Australia-wide comparative analysis of access to secondary education revealed that the mean distance a child has to travel to attend a secondary school (year 7/8 to year 10) is shown in Table 1.

Government sector

Figure 1. Students in NT schools, June 1991



Government schools 82.2 per cent Non-government schools 17.8 per cent

Source: NT Department of Education

Table 1. Mean distance travelled to attend secondary school (k)

NSW	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*
8.89	6.47	20.09	11.82	22.65	9.86	71.87

Source: NT Department of Education, Statistics and Demography Section

In 1991 there were 148 government schools (excluding preschools and homeland centre schools) throughout the Territory—44 urban, 18 rural and 86 remote:

- Urban—Darwin, Palmerston and Alice Springs;
- Rural—Katherine, Tennant Creek, Jabiru, Nhulunbuy and the Darwin rural area;
- Remote—all other areas.

The physical and social environment imposes exceptional cost disabilities. School-aged children comprise 22.5 per cent of the total Northern Territory population. This proportion is greater than in any of the States. Students are widely dispersed over terrain which necessitates many small schools. These are expensive to maintain and supply. The diverse racial and social nature of the student body requires additional expenditures on curriculum and language support staff and resources.

Table 2. Enrolments by level, school type, gender, Northern Territory, 1991

	Male	*Female*	*Total*
Non-government			
Primary	1,425	1,431	2,856
Secondary high	994	884	1,878
Primary-secondary	894	893	1,787
Total	3,313	3,208	6,521
Government			
Primary	9,160	8,7633	17,893
Secondary high	2,774	2,715	5,489
Secondary college	847	730	1,577
Primary-secondary	2,523	2,393	4,916
Special	83	57	140
Total	*15,387*	*14,628*	*30,015*
All schools	**18, 700**	**17,836**	**36,536**

Source: June 1991 census

These schools include one-teacher schools in isolated areas, large and small Aboriginal schools, community education centres, area schools, schools of the air, a secondary correspondence school, large urban primary and secondary schools, junior high schools (years 7/8–10), comprehensive high schools and senior secondary colleges (years 11–12). There also are a large number of homeland centre schools. Total government school enrolments for 1991 were 30,015 students, excluding part-time correspondence students and all evening students.

Non-government sector

Details of enrolments are included in Table 2.

Priority objectives for 1991

Government sector

Since self-government in 1978, Northern Territory government schools have been directed by a set of goals which have strong correlation with the 1989 Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia. In 1983 the NT Department of Education published *Northern Territory Schools—Directions for the Eighties*, which detailed objectives in areas of priority concern for Territory schools. These objectives have directed developments in school education through the 1980s and are consistent with the national goals.

The year 1991 was a year of considerable change for education in the Northern Territory. Erosion of the government's funding base led to a comprehensive review of expenditure and education came under intense scrutiny. Significant reductions were made in funding allocations to education but all steps were taken to ensure that schools could continue to develop programs and activities aimed at achieving the national goals.

Highlights of 1991 activities and their relationship to the national goals are set out below. It should be noted that all of the financial, physical and human resources of the Territory's school education sector are directed towards the fulfilment of the national goals in some measure.

Excellence and equity

- Full implementation of the three stages of the Master Teacher Scheme (known as Advanced Skills Teachers in some States), which provides a career structure for excellent teachers to continue in classroom practice rather than moving into administrative stream positions. (goals 1 and 2)
- A strategic plan for professional and career development came into effect, aimed at providing a means of upgrading skills throughout the Territory teaching force within a cooperative environment involving the department, professional associations, subject associations and higher education institutions. (all goals)
- The Gifted Children's Advisory Committee completed a revised draft policy on the education of the gifted and talented, to be used for consultation early in 1992. An important emphasis of the revised draft policy is on identifying gifted and talented students from Aboriginal backgrounds. (goal 3)
- Considerable progress was made by the Aboriginal Schools Curriculum Materials Project in developing materials to assist Aboriginal students attain learning outcomes comparable with other Territory students. Training of five Aboriginal teachers in the process of curriculum development has taken place as part of this project. (goals 3 and 6)
- Some 40 Aboriginal students graduated from Batchelor College with the award of Associate Diploma of Teaching (or a higher award) and the majority have taken up teaching positions in their home communities. In addition, two Aboriginal students graduated with a Diploma of Education (Adult). (goals 3 and 6)
- During 1991, 23 new school councils were established in communities with predominantly Aboriginal populations. Aboriginal parents are having an impact in areas such as increasing attendance and in matters such as the incorporation of Aboriginal culture into the school's curriculum, with a flow-on effect into the curriculum in other schools. (goals 3, 7 and 8)
- Gender-equity curriculum committees were established in some major subject areas and arrangements were set in place to ensure that future curriculum statements incorporate a focus on gender equity. (goal 3)
- To support the Territory's languages other than English (LOTE) policy, some 30 teachers attended intensive language and cultural courses in Asia during 1991. (goals 3 and 6)
- Final drafts of the syllabus documents for all stages of the National Indonesian Language Curriculum Project (hosted by the NT) were completed and forwarded to Curriculum Corporation for publication. (goal 6)
- The department completed a survey of Aboriginal languages and associated education needs in the Barkly region and the report is now available. (goals 1, 2, 3 and 6)
- The department has provided leadership for two major components of the Australian Education Council Remote Areas Program. (goal 3)

General and vocational education

- Revision of the compulsory secondary curriculum components of technical studies began. A major feature of the revision is the development of a checklist to ensure conformity with national strategies for the education of girls. (goals 6 and 3)
- Career education received a boost with the appointment for two years of a full-time education officer. During semester two, work began on the establishment of a computerised Northern Territory database of information about occupational and further education options. This will be part of a national database and will be introduced into all NT secondary schools, colleges and TAFE centres during 1992. (goal 10)
- The Where Did They Go research project investigates the educational and occupation destinations of Northern Territory school leavers. The study has been conducted in 1989, 1990 and 1991 to assist in the formulation of effective strategies to better serve the needs of the youth of the Northern Territory. (goals 10 and 5)

Areas of student learning

- A new English curriculum for years T–10 completed the second year of its two-year introductory program through the Professional and Career Development program. (goals 1 and 6)
- A new junior secondary mathematics course of study received final approval in 1991 and will be implemented in 1992. (goals 1 and 6)
- External assessment of year 10 students in English and mathematics continued in 1991. Results from externally moderated school-based assessment were combined with results from common instruments of assessment, externally set and marked, in the ratio 70:30, to produce a final score. (goals 1 and 6)
- During 1991 years 5 and 7 students attending urban schools were assessed in English and mathematics, using test materials based on the NT Board of Studies approved curricula. New tests were written for the 1991 program. In schools in predominantly Aboriginal communities, students aged 10 and above were assessed in English and mathematics. New tests were developed specifically for this purpose. (goals 1, 3 and 6)
- The Northern Territory together with New South Wales (host state), Victoria and Tasmania developed a mathematics profile covering years 1 to 10 under the management of the Curriculum and Assessment Committee of the Australian Education Council. (goals 1 and 6)
- New moderation procedures for year 10 science were trialled and will be implemented in 1992. (goals 1 and 6)
- A series of short television programs—*Science Territory*—was produced and broadcast several times each week on both commercial television channels in the Territory. The series was a joint initiative of the NT Chamber of Mines and Petroleum, the Science Teachers Association and the department and was sponsored by BHP Petroleum. (goal 6)
- In-service programs were offered on a more rigorous approach to social education (social literacy) and the approach was trialled in several schools. The knowledge gained has been used to inform the continuing review of the social education years T–10 curriculum. (goals 2, 7, 6 and 8)
- The School Development in Health Program was piloted and a major health education resource for schools in predominantly Aboriginal communities—*Health is Life*—was published. (goals 9 and 3)
- A revised version of the Junior Secondary Studies Certificate was approved by the NT Board of Studies in 1991 and will be issued for the first time to those students completing year 10 in 1992. The new certificate is a completion certificate, issued to students who complete the board-approved curriculum over three years of secondary education. It will no longer report on school-based courses or core objectives as such but instead records achievement in the 11 areas of board-approved curriculum (which incorporates the core components). (goal 5)

Conclusion

These priority areas, when considered along with the ongoing activities of Northern Territory teachers, parents, schools, professional/subject associations and the department, demonstrate that the education partnership in the Northern Territory is making significant progress towards the achievement of the national goals.

Catholic system

Priority objectives for 1991

Major emphases were:

- to prepare students for full adult lives as active Christian members of society;
- to provide an effective educational environment which will foster positive human relationships in the school community and which will encourage students to develop a

healthy self-esteem and a sense of social responsibility and will equip them to deal with the dangers of substance abuse;

- to improve the participation and achievements of students who are affected by:
  - –material poverty
  - –ethnicity
  - –the complexity and diversity of Aboriginal communities
  - –geographic isolation
  - –physical, emotional or intellectual factors
- to improve the quality of education by maximising the competence, efficiency and confidence of staff in Catholic Schools through in-service training and improved career paths;
- to provide students with the basic skills of literacy, including communication skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing in English; with skills of numeracy, including the basic mathematical and computing skills; with skills of analysis, inquiry and problem solving; with an appreciation and understanding of the creative arts; and with a frame of reference for the exercise of judgement in matters of morality and ethics.

Secondary emphases were:

- to provide schools and facilities that specifically meet the education needs of Aboriginal people, support them in their quest for self-determination and cultural integrity, and provide them with the skills needed to cope with contemporary society;
- to acknowledge and respond to the needs of parents within the broader community;
- to provide curriculum choices which enable students to celebrate and participate in their cultural heritage;
- to promote processes of accountability to the local school community, to the Church and to society in a climate open to positive change and growth.

Non-systemic non-Catholic schools

Major initiatives

Non-government schools as independent institutions do not have coordinated objectives, as each school reflects its client group's philosophy.

The non-government schools seek to offer maximum opportunity for each student to participate in academic programs and in the community life generally.

The non-government sector is responding to the need to increase the level of retention providing increased access to isolated families and lift the participation rates of Aboriginal people in education. A major priority is to give rural students an access to the full range of secondary services which lead to TAFE and to the university.

The Northern Territory Government has revised its policy on the issue of interstate travel and this, with the need to provide more places for traditional Aboriginal communities, will place increasing demand on boarding places. There are three residential providers currently associated with the non-government schools (596 beds), with Yirara College also becoming a provider of 200 beds in 1993.

The great issue to face is that no schools have the capacity to cross-subsidise from day-school operations.

Primary schools have been concerned with the development of language and literature and are party to the review on the age of commencement as well as year of exit.

The Northern Territory private sector has been showing a steady increase in enrolments.

The independent schools in the Northern Territory are described in the following sections.

Araluen Christian School

At the commencement of 1991 the Darwin Christian Schools took over the ownership of the Araluen Christian School. The formation of a school council giving parents the responsibility of day-to-day management, new staff and some building enhancements saw the school population double in size from 1990.

Marara Christian School

Marara Christian School were pleased to welcome five students from Papua New Guinea under the AIDAB scheme. Students again participated in our developing South East Asia program and enjoyed two weeks in Indonesia. An annexe program was developed for commencement in 1992 where teaching, for a small group, is project based rather than discipline based.

Palmerston Christian School

Palmerston Christian School completed a classroom using parental help, and continued to develop its computer education.

Living Waters

The objectives of the school were:

- to develop in students, as far as their potential will allow, basic skills in English, literacy, numeracy, social studies and other common school subjects, as well as an appreciation and understanding of the creative arts;
- to provide a spiritual base from which students are enabled to make acceptable Christian value judgements in matters of morality, ethics and social justice;

- to assist all students enrolled at the school to recognise their worth, to realise their potential, and to respect and serve their fellows;
- to be especially concerned about individuals who have special learning needs;
- to teach languages other than English;
- to assist all students to develop skills and competencies in science, and an appreciation for discovery activities.

Essington School

During 1991, Essington School:

- initiated a language and cultural program using Indonesian as its base;
- established a comprehensive library, including an audiovisual section;
- commenced a computer education program with the installation of computers in each classroom;
- commenced the development of individual student evaluation and program booklets.

St John's College

The number of full-fee paying overseas students grew and diversified, taking in students from Indonesia, Hong Kong, Papua New Guinea and Malaysia. Plans were developed to increase and enhance the boarding accommodation. Significant student exchanges occurred with Reunion (France) and Kupang (Indonesia). More than 50 students from these and other places spent some time at St John's. Student numbers remained steady at around 680.

St. John's prepared for the introduction of the South Australian Certificate of Education in the senior college and planned for the expected increase in senior college enrolments. Throughout the year the education of Aboriginal students remained a high priority and levels of participation, evidenced through high retention, became a feature. Future needs in this area have become more apparent. Year 12 students achieved outstanding results through SSABSA.

Through the Transition Unit for Aboriginal Community Children and the Intensive English Unit for non-English speaking background students, St John's College continues to provide excellent opportunities for disadvantaged children to become fully integrated into the standard educational program. This was exemplified by the successful transition of a totally blind Aboriginal student into mainstream education in year 8.

In 1991, for the first time, senior students of St John's College were able to complete National Training Board modules towards a range of apprenticeships through the Territory Training Centre while maintaining their progress towards the South Australian Certificate of Education (NT). The college maintained its strong link with the Territory Training Centre in the junior school and a significant number of students chose vocational courses in addition to a basic education course at school.

Developments in mathematics, LOTE and English included the following:

- Computing and graphics education facilities were expanded to cope with the technological demands being made by the curricula of both senior and junior mathematics.
- Five languages—Chinese, French, Indonesian, Italian and Japanese—were taught at St John's College. Language instruction of three hours per week through years 8 and 9 was compulsory for all students, except those requiring remedial attention. Thirty-one senior students (i.e. 14 per cent of the senior school population) were voluntarily studying at least one LOTE subject towards the SACE (NT).
- The in-servicing of the entire staff in the Implementing the English Curriculum Program was completed.

St Andrew's

St Andrew's commenced a second language program in 1991, focusing on Japanese language and culture for classes through from transition to year 7. Construction of a new library was commenced, enabling provision of a school assembly area.

St Philip's College, Alice Springs

In 1991, with the commencement of year 11, the college had a priority of increasing retention and participation rates through to year 12 in 1992. Northern Territory residents studying interstate are being attracted back to the college through its commitment to cater for isolated students with pastoral care programs. The college is developing its facilities into a full comprehensive secondary school, although it continues to fulfil its role as a multi-access hostel for other urban government schools. New hostel accommodation for 28 students, which was funded under the Commonwealth's Hostels for Rural Schools Program, was completed in time for the 1992 academic year.

One of the aims of St Philip's College is to make education available to all, regardless of race or sex. Many boarding house students came from remote areas around Australia, including Broome and Port Augusta. In addition, there were students from Darwin and Japan.

Curriculum developments in 1991 included the following:

- In mathematics, to enable students to extend beyond the standard normally expected, as well as to assist those struggling with basics, a mathematics teacher was available three days a week after normal school hours (at a local mathematics quiz night, St Philip's students won all three categories).

- As well as following the guidelines set down by the NT Board of Studies for English, St Philip's was one of two schools which taught a new course, English for life.
- Science and geography courses had local geology and desert weather conditions written into the curriculum.
- In home economics, use was made of the local tourism and hospitality industry to study approaches required to develop a most important part of the local economy.

Kormilda College

Enrolment in 1991 grew to 337 students, including 300 isolated students in residence at the college.

Kormilda College continued to develop its academic program during 1991. Successful student completions for years 10–12 were as follows:

	JSSC	*Year 11 NT Board of Studies*	*Year 12 SABSSA*
Aboriginal	27	18	8
Non-Aboriginal	16	23	7

The college was accepted by the International Baccalaureate Organisation to teach the IB diploma course commencing 1993. This program complements a number of other developments to ensure the college caters for the widest range of student ability. Significant curriculum development work has occurred in the area of numeracy and literacy development for isolated Aboriginal students.

A new pastoral care program has been developed to cater more adequately for the very wide range of needs exhibited by isolated students.

Forward enrolment projections suggest that the 1992 enrolment will total 450.

Excellence and equity

Student retention/participation

Continuing success is being achieved with students staying at school longer to improve their general education, skills and qualifications. Student apparent retention rates, which increased in 1990, demonstrated a sharp increase in 1991, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Student apparent retention rates, 1990–91

	1990	*1991*
Year 8 to year 12	48	57
Year 10 to year 11	77	82
Year 11 to year 12	72	94

Source: NT Department of Education

Secondary colleges were introduced in the Northern Territory in 1987. The colleges offer a wide range of year 11 and year 12 courses over an extended day to full-time and part-time students including an increasing number of mature-age students.

Provision for the diverse range of students generated by increased retention rates has required the development of courses for students with a wide range of abilities and aspirations. Vocationally oriented courses and senior secondary–TAFE cooperative programs have been and are being developed.

The establishment of community education centres in selected Aboriginal communities during 1988 to 1991 has led to increased access to, and participation in, secondary and post-secondary programs. Community education centres supplement the provision for Aboriginal secondary students to board at Yirara and St Philip's in Alice Springs, or Kormilda and St John's in Darwin.

Table 4. Apparent retention rates by gender, government and non-government schools 1987–91

	1987	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*
Government					
Female					
Year 8–Year 11	67.9	67.3	70.5	61.5	65.0
Year 8–Year 12	46.4	52.2	47.2	53.2	61.2
Male					
Year 8–Year 11	65.9	66.2	67.7	60.2	67.4
Year 8–Year 12	40.7	44.4	41.5	46.4	60.5
Non-government					
Female					
Year 8–Year 11	53.7	53.6	60.7	57.4	71.9
Year 8–Year 12	32.3	30.1	38.3	44.8	36.0
Male					
Year 8–Year 11	51.3	56.3	51.9	62.3	61.0
Year 8–Year 12	25.4	24.4	28.6	33.3	37.2

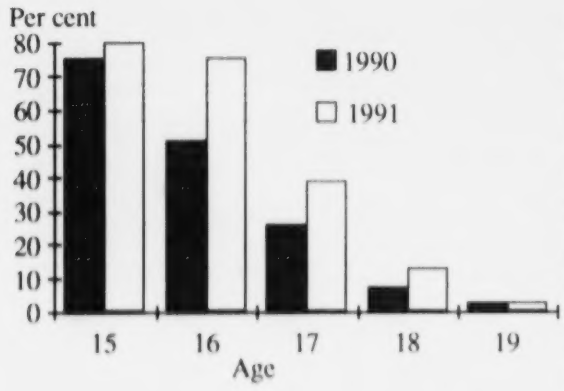
Source: NT Department of Education

Devolution of responsibility to school councils

Since 1983 school councils have received increased power and responsibilities in relation to educational policy and resource allocation.

Many school councils were active in the planning and decision making with regard to school programs and the development of budgets which reflected their goals included in the Action Plans for School Improvement. School staff and parents were involved in:

Figure 2. Age participation rates (15–19), 1990 and 1991



Source: 1991 figures derived from ABS estimated resident population figures

- deployment of classroom and specialist teachers;
- staff selection;
- consultative programming and budgeting;
- implementing curriculum and educational programs;
- a series of services, including grounds maintenance;
- cleaning, urgent minor repairs and minor new works.

During 1991 it was decided to implement a *Standard Devolution Package* to assist schools in undertaking greater responsibility for self-management. After consultation with representatives from the wider educational environment, a steering committee was established to coordinate the implementation of the package. A draft report comprising the working party's reports was distributed widely. Responses were received and considered before the steering committee made its final report to the Secretary of Education. The final *Standard Devolution Package* was published late in 1991 for full implementation by school councils in 1992.

Curriculum uniformity and national compatibility

Students in Northern Territory schools are highly mobile—approximately 10 per cent change schools within the Territory each year and many arrive from or move interstate.

The Northern Territory continued to give high priority to addressing issues concerned with student mobility. The 1991 editions of the AEC *Mobile Students: Guides for Schools, Parents and Employers* were purchased from Curriculum Corporation and distributed widely.

Many students have difficulties adjusting to new school environments and differences in curricula, teaching and learning methods. Adjustment problems are alleviated by ensuring appropriate curriculum uniformity throughout Northern Territory schools and that content of the Northern Territory curriculum is comparable to that of other States.

The curriculum also has sufficient flexibility to provide for students' special needs. Problems such as teacher turnover, distance, communication difficulties, a small and dispersed population and cultural differences make curriculum support and appropriate in-service activities costly and difficult to provide. These factors reinforce the need for comparability of standards and consistency of courses throughout the Territory.

Equity initiatives

Students of Aboriginal descent

In 1991 Aborigines made up 33 per cent of the total Northern Territory student population and 37 per cent of primary students. Seventy-three per cent of the Aboriginal student population are tribally oriented and live in remote and rural communities. Bilingual schools teach in 17 Aboriginal languages in addition to English. While recognising the differing backgrounds and needs of Aboriginal students, the objective is to improve academic performance significantly in order that students may qualify for entry to training courses and higher education.

A significant initiative is the ongoing establishment of vocational education centres. The Remote Area Teacher Education Program, the Mentor Program and the Aboriginal Education Program are all initiatives which increase participation in education by Aboriginal Territorians.

Aboriginal languages/bilingual education

The Northern Territory has maintained its support for Aboriginal languages through the continuation of the Bilingual Education Program, and, where a bilingual program has not been requested, through the encouragement of LOTE-type Aboriginal language programs.

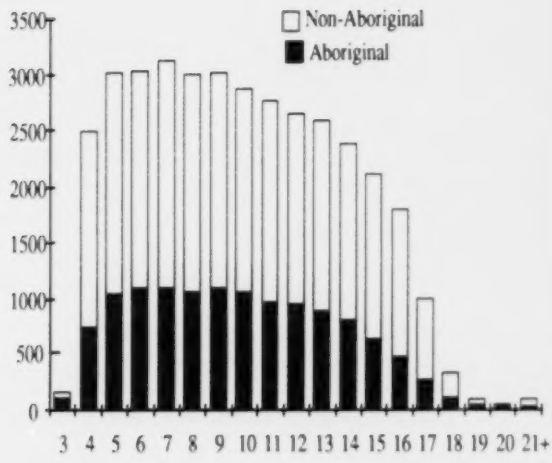
Bilingual education programs operate in 21 communities which contain approximately half the Northern Territory's Aboriginal population. In 1991 these communities involved 3,472 Aboriginal primary and secondary age students.

A range of specialist field staff is employed to support and implement the program, including thirty-six (26 FTE) literacy workers, eighteen teacher-linguists, ten literature production supervisors and four linguists. There is one office-based policy and curriculum advisory officer.

Aboriginal schools which have not requested a formal bilingual education program are being encouraged to develop their own Aboriginal language and culture program

as part of their overall school program. Due to increasing requests for assistance in this area, a range of program models to suit varying contexts has been developed. In addition to access to part-time instructor funding, schools have the flexibility within their own school-based budgets to organise the levels of funding they, and their community, deem appropriate to support their local language and culture programs.

Figure 3. Age profile of students in NT schools, 1991



Source: NT Department of Education

Remote Areas Program

In November 1990 the Australian Education Council's Remote Areas Working Party presented its report *Provision of Access to Education in Remote Areas, to Predominantly Aboriginal Students.*

As well as defining the collaborative models agreed upon by the participating States and Territories, this report provided the direction and the strategies for the development and implementation of five projects collectively known as the AEC Remote Area Program (ARAP) and nominated States and Territories for the coordination and carriage of specific projects. The Northern Territory Department of Education has responsibility for the management of two projects (Projects 1 and 4).

Both projects work closely with their Aboriginal clientele and interstate reference teams. A standing committee on Aboriginal education (NT) and a curriculum reference group chaired by the Assistant Secretary, Curriculum Assessment Division (NT) review curriculum outputs of these projects and closely monitor and provide direction for course development.

Project 1. The provision of access to education in remote areas for Aboriginal students

This project has seen the completion of revised T–3 School of the Bush student workbooks and other related material. In conjunction with the Northern Territory Aboriginal Education Strategic Program Operational Plan, further development of School of the Bush will address the needs of the year 4–7 clientele.

Project 4. Provision of junior secondary distance education courses to remote area Aboriginal students

Under Project 4, the mathematics and English distance education courses for years 8 and 9 students will be completed by the end of 1992. A video production for Aboriginal parents and students, *The Way Ahead*, and the recording of a motivational sound tape has been completed.

It is anticipated that this project will be continued into the 1993–95 triennium so that as well as extending the English and mathematics programs to year 10, other subjects may also be catered for.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy

Activities under the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy were again significant within Aboriginal school education for 1991.

For 1991, the Northern Territory Department of Education operated some 35 projects emphasising areas such as:

- tutorial assistance for Aboriginal adults in remote areas studying to become primary school teachers;
- development of specialised primary-level curriculum materials for use in remote (predominantly Aboriginal) schools and the development of specialised secondary level material for use in distance mode;
- further development of primary assessment instruments for use in remote (predominantly Aboriginal) schools;
- provision of upgraded access to computer-based learning facilities in many remote schools;
- development of community based student counselling to extend information to students about post-school vocational options;
- development of community-based activities to promote success for Aboriginal students about post-school vocational options;

- construction of new and extension of existing facilities in many remote communities;
- specialised support programs to improve educational outcomes for the many pre-primary and primary age students in remote areas with chronic hearing loss from disease.

Gains were made in the following areas:

- the extent of community involvement in educational decision making;
- the steady growth in the number of preschool programs involving Aboriginal students;
- the number of children enrolled in compulsory schooling programs (primary and junior secondary)—the 1991 outcome shows continued improvement;
- the growth of Aboriginal secondary student enrolments in the 12–18-year-old age group;
- improving retention rates of students attending school to year 12 for 1991 in comparison to the outcome for 1990;
- bilingual programs with a total of 17 Aboriginal languages from Djambarrapuyngu in the north to Pitjantjatjara in the south.

Providing for special needs

Student services embraces the areas of special education, early intervention, guidance, hearing impairment, visual impairment, behaviour management, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and home liaison. In addition to specialist personnel in these areas, the student services network includes school counsellors, special schools and units, detention centres and hospital schools.

While priority is given to the work of special schools, the specific placement of students with disabilities into the most appropriate educational setting relies on close cooperation among specialist staff, parents, and schools through a system of placement panels. During 1991 continuing emphasis was placed, wherever possible, on maximising the integration of individuals with disabilities into mainstream schooling.

Gender equity

Gender-equity issues in curriculum continued to be a major focus as structures for monitoring curriculum inclusivity were set in place and old processes restructured. Schools were encouraged to target girls' education within their action plans for school improvement and place emphasis on the appropriateness of courses including language, content, context and methodology.

The application of approved gender-inclusive curriculum guidelines continued, while gender-equity curriculum committees for major subject areas were established and curriculum statements for school use developed. These will be reviewed at the end of the year and will incorporate this focus on gender equity.

The implementation of specific policy supporting girls in NT schools continued within the framework of the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools and the 1986 Northern Territory information statement *Equal Opportunities in Education*.

A reference group has been established to maintain NT departmental input to the review of the national policy document.

Initiatives for girls in 1991 focused on the four objectives outlined in the national policy document:

- to raise awareness of the educational needs of girls;
- to provide equal access to and participation in appropriate curriculum;
- to foster a supportive school environment;
- to encourage equitable resource allocation.

The Senior Education Officer (Girls) negotiated the resources and agreement for Tradeswomen on the Move II with the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training and the Employment and Training Branch of Northern Territory Department of Education. The project will embrace an increased number of smaller remote centres and to cater for this will run for an extended period.

Catholic system

Retention rates to year 12 and participation rates in 15–19-year-old age range

The Catholic education system does not have senior secondary schools within the Northern Territory. Encouragement was given in all schools to facilitate higher retention rates for post-compulsory school students. This was evidenced in Aboriginal community schools, where Lytentye Apurte School, Santa Teresa was granted community education status in December 1990 and Xavier Boys' School, Nguiu, Bathurst Island had achieved that goal by December, 1991, thus making additional courses available to older students in remote areas. Negotiations were also instigated for university preparation classes to be conducted on Bathurst Island commencing in 1992 with an enrolment of approximately 50 students. Whilst some of these were beyond the 15–19-year-old age range, incentives are being provided for students to continue with their education in a local area.

Devolution of responsibility and decision making and community participation

Catholic schools in the Northern Territory have a history of local responsibility. However, during 1991 this was extended to encourage the development and education of local school boards with increased status and powers. Representatives from Alice Springs, Katherine, Bathurst

Island and Darwin attended a three-day conference in Rockhampton, on the Shared Wisdom Model of School Board Decision Making. Following this, a full weekend conference was held in Darwin for all members of school boards in Catholic schools in the Northern Territory who were able to attend. Specialist speakers from interstate conducted the conference which was found to be most successful and was well attended by members of all schools and by members of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

On Bathurst Island, Murrupurtiyanuwu Catholic School has established an interim board. A significant change instigated by this board was the change in the name of the school to a name of Tiwi significance. This change was celebrated with due ceremony in a traditional manner. The Catholic education system has been represented through its members on ATSIC regional councils and these have stimulated some valuable discussion on education issues. On Bathurst Island, development of the local museum with assistance from the Northern Territory Museum has provided an important educational resource for all members of the island as well as for the large numbers of tourists who regularly visit the island.

Under the AESIP Program, a three-day conference was organised in Darwin for representatives of the Aboriginal communities associated with all the Catholic schools in the Northern Territory. This conference culminated in the formation of the CEAAC (Catholic Education Aboriginal Advisory Council), which was to provide direct advice on education issues affecting Aboriginal people within the diocese. Subcommittees were elected to ensure each region had direct access to the council.

Increased involvement of parents was evident in all schools, not only in the school boards but in a variety of activities associated with each school. The establishment of ASSPA committees in all schools catering for Aboriginal students was a significant development during 1991. This was assisted through the appointment of a community liaison officer to facilitate the formation of these committees.

The task force, consisting of members from the Independent Schools Staff Association, the school principals and Catholic Education Office, met regularly to discuss matters of mutual concern and to establish guidelines for the effective functioning of schools at the local level.

Issues affecting quality schooling: student mobility

The isolation of the Territory from the more populated areas of Australia, together with the nature of work available, composition of the local population and student mobility, presents many challenges to education systems. The planning and setting up of a special program for assessing the educational needs of students moving to the Darwin region has been an attempt to assist these students, especially those from the families of the armed forces transferred to Darwin.

In the Alice Springs region, there has been considerable cooperation between Catholic High School, OLSH Primary School and Lytentye Apurte, Santa Teresa to cater for those children from Santa Teresa who spend some time with their families in the Alice Springs area and then return to Santa Teresa. In the Daly River region, three homeland centres, with a total enrolment of 41 students in March 1992, were established during 1991 to cater for those students who were part of the Daly River community but spent more time in more remote areas of the region. One full-time teacher was employed by St Francis Xavier's School, Daly River to work with the teaching assistants to provide education at a primary school level in these homeland centres.

In the Darwin area, a unit for itinerant Aboriginal students who have previously not attended school for any significant period was planned and has been established in 1992.

Equity initiatives—access and participation

Commonwealth special purpose programs funding from the Special Education Program, Disadvantaged Schools Program and Australian Second Language Learning Program (ASLLP) supported a number of initiatives. The Catholic system did not have access to the Country Areas Program as the one school, St Joseph's, Katherine, was decreed ineligible due to a change in eligibility criteria. It is important to note that the five Catholic Aboriginal schools (formerly Mission Schools) based in remote communities continue to be denied access to any of the specific purpose programs.

Special Education Program

The Catholic Education Council developed and approved a policy paper on integration, and in-service programs were provided for all teachers and for special education teachers to assist in its implementation. A Special Needs Officer was appointed at the Catholic Education Office to assist teachers in the schools to ensure that all children were provided with an education program appropriate to their specific needs and abilities. The services of a speech therapist and occupational therapist were also made available to students within the system. Individual schools also accessed funding directly, which allowed them to employ special education assistants and purchase appropriate resources to support children with disabilities.

English as a Second Language Program

Funding was allocated to schools on a submission basis to employ teachers and assistants with the relevant skills and experience to help students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Disadvantaged Schools Program

Two schools in the Catholic system were designated as 'disadvantaged'—St Joseph's Primary, Katherine and

Catholic High School, Alice Springs. In 1991 the focus was on literacy enrichment and the further development of an expressive arts program, respectively.

ASLLP Program

Funding was again distributed to schools on a submission basis. Language programs in Indonesian, Italian, Arrente and Greek were supported through the employment of teachers from the relevant language backgrounds.

Aboriginal communities

Bilingual education continued in Aboriginal community schools and continued to have support from the local communities in both the literacy programs and the production of materials for teaching purposes.

Development of the community education centres in the remote communities has also increased access for a greater number of students to educational programs suited to their needs and expectations.

Improved facilities for preschool education with the opening of a new pre-school building at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School, Wadeye (Port Keats) and the planning of a similar facility for Nguiu (Bathurst Island) for 1992 were also significant steps in the provision of educational facilities for all Australian children.

General and vocational education

Vocational education

Within the urban schools, there has been a growth in the availability of courses suited to the general and vocational needs of the students. Remote community schools have offered TAFE and adult education courses in a wide range of subject areas. In all schools, there has been increased offering in subjects relating to technology and the use of computers. Career education has increased in significance and staff attended conferences relating to this important aspect of education in the 1990s. Members of the Catholic education system participated in the VEGAS programs organised through the Northern Territory University to encourage a greater participation in higher education by Aboriginal children.

Aboriginal teacher education

Large numbers of RATE students are being supported through the remote Aboriginal community schools and 1991 was another year for graduations and an increase in the number of Aboriginal teachers prepared for a place within the Catholic education system of the Northern Territory.

Non-systemic non-Catholic schools

Issues of access and equity were discussed in an earlier section of this chapter.

General and vocational education

Changing arrangements for post-compulsory schooling

To cater for the changing nature of the senior secondary cohort, owing to increased retention to year 12, a number of new courses were developed in 1991. Several of these courses were vocational in nature, e.g. tourism studies, automotive studies, child care and developing employment potential.

Preparations continued during 1991 for the introduction in 1992 of the South Australian Certificate of Education (NT), a new two-year senior secondary completion certificate.

School–TAFE links

Since the establishment of the Northern Territory University, formed by an amalgamation of the Darwin Institute of Technology and University College of the Northern Territory, local students have had increased access to tertiary programs formerly only available interstate.

One of the most significant features of the university is that it has an Institute of Technical and Further Education as an integral part. This combination enables the university to offer a very wide range of courses from certificate to doctorate level and articulation of technical, further and higher education programs.

The Northern Territory Government has continued to assist students involved in tertiary education by making available awards for study at the university and through award and scholarship schemes for students having to study interstate.

The Tertiary and Further Education Advisory Council (TAFEAC) ceased operations and functions in the second half of 1991, having been superseded by the Northern Territory Employment and Training Authority (NTETA) and its legislative framework. NTETA was established, with its primary function to 'establish a network of suppliers of vocational education and training that meets the needs of competitive industry and the rights of people to lead fulfilling independent lives'. In conjunction with this has been a greater articulation of courses and credits between all deliverers of post-compulsory education, including schools and TAFE.

In late 1991 procedures for the registration of private providers of vocational education and training were formalised under NTETA legislation, allowing a greater choice of courses for post-compulsory students.

Dual accreditation and credit transfer arrangements were extended during 1991. The NT Board of Studies approved arrangements for TAFE units taught in colleges and schools

to count towards the South Australian Certificate of Education (NT).

Initiatives in career education

Initiatives in career education included the following:

- An officer was appointed in 1991 to plan for the introduction of the Job and Course Explorer database of employment and further education information in 1992.
- The NT provided input to the draft *National Framework for Career Education*.
- Career markets were held in Darwin and major centres in the Northern Territory.

Transition from education to work or further education

In the 1990 school year, 1,813 students of school-leaving age (15 years) permanently left the NT urban secondary school system and entered a range of destinations. A survey of the student destinations, *Where Did They Go*, was conducted by the department in 1991.

The purpose of the study was to describe aspects of the school-to-work transition such as why students left school, which destinations they entered, why they entered these destinations, how those who elected to leave prior to the completion of year 12 now felt about that decision and how many school leavers achieved a higher education entrance score but did not enter a tertiary institution or deferred entry.

Of the 1,023 students surveyed (those who left during years 10, 11 or 12 in 1990), 47.41 per cent went into jobs in the Northern Territory and 17.6 per cent moved into higher education, either in the Northern Territory or interstate.

Community information programs

An extensive promotional campaign was conducted during 1991 in schools and through parent bodies and community groups to promote new initiatives in senior secondary curriculum, assessment and certification and in particular the new South Australian Certificate of Education (NT) and its requirements.

Areas of student learning

Government sector

English

The year 1991 was the second year of a two-year introductory program for the *English Board Approved Course of Study, Transition to Year 10*. This program, Implementing the English Curriculum (ITEC), enabled all teachers of English in secondary schools and all teachers in urban primary schools to become familiar with the new curriculum before its use became mandatory in urban schools from 1992. It also provided an opportunity for all teachers to participate in the process of trialling the course while it was still in draft form, and contributing to its final form.

At senior secondary level, 1991 provided an opportunity for the trialling of the proposed procedures and criteria for assessment for the writing-based literacy assessment for the SACE (NT), due to be implemented in 1992. Three new board-approved stage 1 (normally year 11) courses were taught for the first time in Northern Territory high schools and secondary colleges. These courses are designed to meet the special needs of students enrolled in the secondary years of schooling for whom the existing five courses, studied by the majority of students, are not suitable.

The Primary Assessment Program continued to assess some aspects of the reading comprehension of students enrolled in years 5 and 7 in urban primary schools, and of students over 11 years of age at stages 2, 3, 4 and 5 in Aboriginal schools. At the year 10 level, 1991 was the third year in which a Common Instrument of Assessment (CIA) was used to determine part of the English grade for the Junior Secondary Studies Certificate.

A major issue in Northern Territory language teaching is that of 'one curriculum, many contexts'. *The English Board Approved Course of Study, Transition to Year Ten* identifies 'English learning outcomes' at stages 3, 7 and 10. The course should give all students equal opportunity to participate fully in the social and economic structures of Australian society. Of the approximately 36,000 students enrolled in Northern Territory schools in 1991 it is estimated that up to half have a language background other than English.

In urban areas, funding for the ESL New Arrivals Program provided specialist ESL teachers at the ratio of 1:10 as above-formula staff in primary and secondary intensive English units in Darwin. For ongoing support, the Commonwealth General Support element provided some funds but the Northern Territory Government provided the bulk of funding for support to students of non-English speaking backgrounds. Of approximately 2,000 students involved, about 40 per cent were Aboriginal.

Aboriginal students learn English in a variety of contexts, including large urban colleges, urban primary and high schools, small and large community schools outside urban areas and remote homeland centres. To support teachers of Aboriginal students in non-urban settings, the NT Education Department continued to provide 15 regionally based ESL coordinators. In addition, curriculum support for students' English learning needs was provided through the ongoing position of Principal Education Officer TESL and a Commonwealth-funded AEP project—the Aboriginal Schools Curriculum Materials Project, which is producing support materials for schools in communities and homeland centres.

The raising of the awareness of teachers of subjects other than English about the English language demands of learning their subject has become a major issue with the introduction of the writing-based literacy assessment as part of the SACE (NT) and Territory participation in both the National and General elements of the Literacy and Learning Project.

Languages other than English

The progressive implementation of the Northern Territory Government's policy on languages other than English continued during 1991. The NT has identified eight priority languages: Aboriginal languages, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, modern Greek and modern standard Chinese.

Table 5. Students undertaking particular LOTE subjects

	Primary		*Junior*		*Senior*	
	M	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*
Chinese	90	74	42	42	25	20
French	27	22	57	77	8	20
German	95	80	57	77	1	7
Greek	0	0	67	52	12	14
Indonesian	1,345	1,338	779	794	25	40
Italian	165	155	73	62	0	2
Japanese	223	254	143	156	6	12
Malay	16	8	0	0	0	0
Aboriginal	648	712	87	132	0	0
Spanish	10	13	0	0	0	1
Vietnamese	0	0	0	0	3	1
Total	**2,619**	**2,656**	**1,313**	**1,398**	**78**	**123**

Source: NT Department of Education

There is still a great shortage of suitably qualified and experienced language teachers and curriculum materials. The issue of training and professional development for teachers is being addressed through the promotion of Asian Studies Council scholarships and study awards which allow teachers to attend intensive language and culture at tertiary institutions either in Asia or Australia. The NT also supports applicants for study awards offered from sources such as the Goethe Institute. Other initiatives in the professional development area include the NT participation in the Japanese Monbusho Rex program and the expansion of the NT Indonesian teacher and student exchange program.

The Northern Territory, with South Australia, has been responsible for the development of the National Indonesian Language Curriculum Project and also provides a project team member for the Distance Education Indonesian Curriculum Project.

Science

Science is taught at all school levels with a time allocation of two hours per week in years T–7 and a total of 360 hours over three years in years 8–10. Course documents for the compulsory years of schooling are currently under review. There are 28 year 11 (stage 1) courses in a range of specialist areas; these are revised on a regular basis.

A moderation process for year 10 science was trialled in 1990–91 for full implementation in 1992. The process involves comparison of student work awarded certain nominated grades on a 20-point scale at a full meeting of teachers at the end of each year. A number of strategies are being pursued to encourage more relevant and exciting teaching and learning processes in science. Family Science—a project which involves whole families in finding out about and taking part in science activities—is being organised by mixed groups of primary and secondary science teachers.

A CSIRO science education centre and a field study centre have also been set up in the past few years to make science a more interesting experience for students.

Some development of science materials designed specifically for Aboriginal students has taken place. These are mainly in the area of natural science.

Technology

Technology is not offered as a subject in its own right but aspects of it are taught in science, computing, technical studies, home economics and business education.

Science is a compulsory subject in years T–10 and technical studies, home economics and business education all have compulsory introductory units in years 8–10. During the years of compulsory schooling, computing is listed as a key learning area but is integrated across the curriculum.

In senior school, all subjects offer a range of semester length courses in year 11 (stage 1) leading to semester- or year-length SSABSA courses at stage 2.

Territory schools have been well equipped with computers and have access to a $2 for $1 subsidy to expand and upgrade their systems and software. At the end of the year, plans were finalised to establish a technology education centre situated in an urban high school.

The main issues in this area relate to the provision of a range of appropriate equipment in all schools at a time of limited resources; and to the best means of ensuring that technology education is fully implemented across all subject areas. The use of technology in delivering distance education programs to people in remote areas is being actively explored.

Mathematics

The year 1991 was the first year in which schools, both urban and rural T–7, began to implement the revised version of the Western Australian mathematics syllabus, *Learning Mathematics*.

The approach to the teaching of mathematics in *Learning Mathematics* represents a significant departure from the more conventional approach and hence has required a significant increase in staff development activities which will extend well into 1992.

A new curriculum for years 8–10 was completed during 1991. This document acknowledges the need for students to 'construct' mathematics as a basis for real understanding and encourages strategies for students to learn mathematics through problem solving. It also encourages student activities, student language and student discovery and will provide a major focus for in-service activities during the coming years.

At senior secondary level, 11 new semester-length courses were developed. These will enable all students to satisfy the pattern requirements of the SACE (NT) and also provide preparation for those intending to study mathematics at stage 2.

The Primary Assessment Program continued to assess student understandings of the mathematics board-approved course at years 5 and 7 in urban schools and at stages 3 and 4 in non-urban primary schools, where the Aboriginal students have attained the age of eleven years or over.

At the year 10 level, 1991 was the third year in which a Common Instrument of Assessment (CIA) contributed to the mathematics grade for the Junior Secondary Studies Certificate.

The major issue during 1991 was related to the implementation of the two new curriculum documents (*Learning Mathematics* and *The Board-Approved Junior Secondary Course of Study*) in schools with predominantly Aboriginal enrolments where students speak English either as a second or further language. Support for the development of materials for students in this context was provided by the Commonwealth-funded Aboriginal Schools Curriculum Materials Project.

Studies of society and environment

This learning area includes two subjects in the Northern Territory curriculum—social education and business education, with aspects of environmental studies also being covered in science.

In years T–7, social education has a time allocation of two hours a week and in years 8–10, 360 hours over three years. In both settings it is a course of study comprising a number of units which are informed by disciplines underlying the subject area; however single units do not necessarily have a single discipline focus. In the senior years specialised courses and subjects appear. Some 16 subjects are offered in stage 2.

Business education in years 8–10 has a compulsory element, focusing on Australian legal and economic systems, with a time allocation of 80 hours. There is also the opportunity for students to undertake electives in areas such as keyboarding. In the senior years, some 23 semester-length courses are offered in stage 1 and some 12 subjects are offered in stage 2, covering a range of specialist areas including economics, legal studies, business management and office skills.

In the area of assessment the main development is the introduction of moderation at year 10 level in social education. During 1991 final Territory-wide trials of moderation based on a common task for year 10 were conducted. Students were required to individually research and report on an issue of social significance of their choice. School assessment of the individual research report was moderated at a meeting of teachers at the end of the year.

Assessment activities for stage 1 SACE (NT) courses and work requirements are being developed for three categories of courses—history, geography and social studies.

A major issue arising in this area is the need to develop teachers' abilities to both recognise and teach towards the language demands of the subject area. Another issue is the impending development of a curriculum framework for the systematic inclusion of Asian studies in all subjects at all levels in the area.

Social education has separate guidelines for years T–7 in urban and non-urban schools. The non-urban document is designed specifically for use in schools in predominantly Aboriginal communities.

The arts

The arts include the learning areas of art, craft and design (visual arts); and dance, drama and music (performing arts). The subject area forms part of the compulsory board-approved curriculum for years T–10, with a time allocation of two hours per week in primary schools and 240 hours over three years in years 8–10. Students are expected to engage in at least one area of visual arts and one area of performing arts. Curriculum documents for the years of compulsory schooling date from 1984 and are currently under revision.

In senior school, there are 24 semester-length courses available at stage 1 of the SACE(NT)—year 11. These include courses in each of the learning areas as well as specialist courses in ceramics and photography.

Assessment procedures for years 8–10 are currently under review and moderation of arts subjects at year 10 has been accepted in principle.

Health

In the Northern Territory the learning area of health is structured as two stand-alone curriculum areas. These are health and physical education in years T–12 and home economics in years 8–12. Personal development is considered to be addressed in both of these curriculum areas. Some health topics are also covered in science.

Significant issues in health and physical education are the provision of appropriate health resources for primary and Aboriginal students; community pressure for inclusion of a range of health issues in a crowded curriculum allocated limited time in school timetables; the need for appropriate training to enable teachers to implement the health and physical education curriculum in the manner intended; and debate about the appropriate emphases and focus in physical education on such things as skill development, games, sports and fitness.

In home economics, issues have included: appropriate curriculum for year 7 students; time allocation for compulsory and elective curriculum in junior secondary schools; decreasing opportunities for elective units; developing a meaningful curriculum from a broad integrated subject area within a limited time allocation; addressing student and community interest in hospitality and catering and providing greater vocational emphasis in courses; and categorisation of senior courses for the South Australian Certificate of Education [SACE (NT)].

A curriculum statement and a board-approved course of study are currently being developed for the health and physical education area. At senior secondary level there are eight semester-length SACE (NT) stage 1 courses in the health and physical education area.

In home economics a draft subject statement and board-approved course of introductory study units have been developed for the junior secondary level and are currently being implemented. Electives are currently developed as school-based curriculum but a range of board-approved elective units is being developed. At senior secondary level there are now 16 semester-length SACE (NT) stage 1 home economics courses.

At present, assessment in both areas is an internal school matter, with grades A to E recorded on the Junior Secondary Studies Certificate issued at the end of year 10. In senior courses assessment requirements are more explicit and a moderation process is employed.

Catholic system

English

Continued emphasis on English as a written and oral form of communication has been maintained through the New Arrivals element of the ESL Program and involvement in intensive in-service for the implementation of the Northern Territory English curriculum continued throughout 1991. At both Catholic High School, Alice Springs and O'Loughlin College, Darwin, results of the year 10 assessment indicated that students from those schools achieved satisfactorily in English. Detailed reports on these programs and achievement are available in other sources. Additional support is required for effective teaching of English to Aboriginal children for whom English is a second language and where health/social factors affect school attendance and/or attention.

Languages other than English

Indonesian, Italian, Arrente and Greek languages were available for students in Catholic urban primary schools and Japanese, Arrente and Indonesian languages were taught in urban secondary schools in the Northern Territory. In the community schools, the Tiwi, Murrinh-patha and Arrente languages are taught within the context of a bilingual school. To support the language programs, cultural exchanges have continued especially between the urban schools and Aboriginal community schools and at the secondary level a group of students and teachers travelled to Indonesia to gain experience of the language and culture during the mid-year vacation.

Literacy programs have continued as part of the bilingual program and have involved a large number of the local communities. Provision of material to support the language programs has been an important aspect of education in the remote Aboriginal community schools.

Mathematics

Mathematics has continued to be seen as an important part of the total curriculum. In the Primary Assessment Program students demonstrated levels of achievement against set criteria. Detailed assessment results are available in other reports. Secondary schools participate in Northern Territory test programs and moderation procedures.

Non-systemic non-Catholic schools

Details were provided earlier in this chapter.

Teaching and learning

Government sector

Recruitment

During 1991 a total of 396 teachers were recruited to the Northern Territory Teaching Service. This recruitment was necessary to cover an overall resignation rate of 16.7 per cent, compared with a resignation rate of 15.8% in 1987, 14.8% in 1988, 17.2% in 1989 and 17.3% in 1990.

Table 6. School-based teaching staff, by level and gender, 1991

School type	*Govt*		*Non-govt*		*All*
	M	*F*	*M*	*F*	*P*
Preschool	3	78	0	6	87
Primary	319	911	47	204	1,481
Secondary	328	390	83	97	898
Special	5	31	0	0	36
Total	**655**	**1,410**	**130**	**307**	**2,502**

Source: NT Department of Education

Continuous promotion policy

Throughout 1991 the Department of Education trialled a new policy on continuous promotion with localised selection panels. Previously major rounds were held annually for substantive and consequential vacancies. The personnel branch coordinated the advertisements, applications and selection panels.

Table 7. Government staff by sector, type and gender—school based and non-school based

	School based		*Non-school based*		*Total*
	M	*F*	*M*	*F*	*P*
Teaching	655	1,411	n.a.	n.a.	2,066
Non-teaching	131	477	181	266	1,055
Total	**786**	**1,888**	**181**	**266**	**3,121**

n.a. not applicable

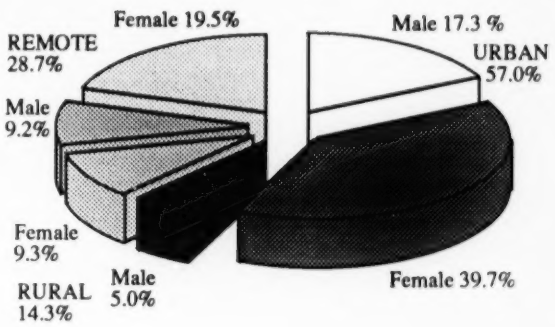
Source: NT Department of Education

Gender-equity principles

Initial training commenced on equal opportunity principles for all selection panel members in lieu of the previous procedure of having a panel member specifically provide the role of equal opportunity adviser.

An equal opportunity management committee was convened to develop an equal opportunity management plan for the department.

Figure 4. Location of government schools teaching staff, June 1991



Source: NT Department of Education

Award restructuring

In 1991 award restructuring continued with remuneration increases under the structural efficiency principles.

In March 1991, a work value case awarded a further 2.15 per cent increase to classroom teachers. The National Wage Case in June 1991 awarded an additional 2.5 per cent to all teaching service classifications. In May 1991 promotional positions were awarded a further 2.15 per cent increase for ET1–ET3 and 4 per cent increase for ET4–ET9 resulting in current rates of:

ET1–9 $43,594–$60,671

T1–T10 $23,105–$38,950 (above the national benchmark)

The cumulative effect has been that in the last 18 months teachers have received many substantial salary rises. These increases have all occurred through sensible negotiation, with Government in many instances making the running and proposing initiatives.

Master Teacher Scheme

The Enhanced Master Teacher Scheme is designed to recognise those members of the Northern Territory Teaching Service who have an outstanding record of success as classroom practitioners. These members possess skills which demonstrate that they are excellent teachers, but do not necessarily wish to seek promotion to positions which involve greater administrative responsibilities.

Master Teacher status involves loadings above the above-mentioned rises of 7.5 per cent for Level 1 to a maximum salary of $41,205, 12.5 per cent for Level 2 to a maximum salary of $42,677, and Level 3 at a salary level of $45,522.

Non-government sector

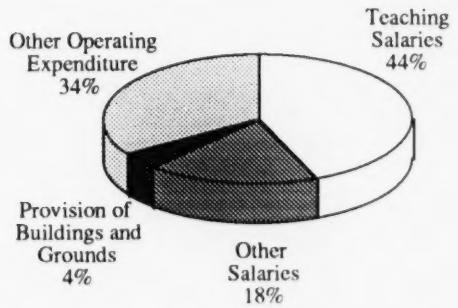
Table 8. Non-government staff by sector, type and gender—school based and non-school based, 1991

	School based		*Non-school based*		*All Total*
	M	*F*	*M*	*F*	*P*
Teaching	131	307	n.a.	n.a.	438
Non-teaching	50	122	*	*	172
Total	**181**	**429**	*	*	**610**

* data not available; n.a. not applicable

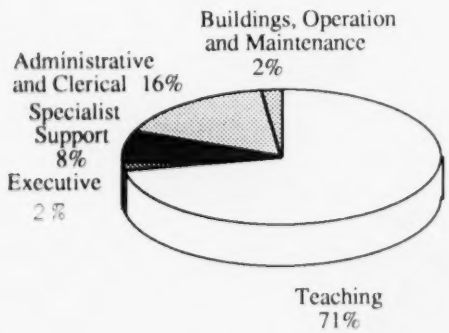
Source: NT Department of Education

Figure 5. Government expenditure on schools by major types, 1990–91



Source: NT Department of Education

Figure 6. Salaries expenditure, 1990–91



Source: NT Department of Education

Resourcing Territory schools

Government sector

Principles of resource distribution and management

The Northern Territory school population has a majority of students of low socioeconomic status. The Northern Territory has the highest per capita ethnic population in Australia. Approximately one-third of the students in the Northern Territory are Aboriginal, comprising mainly traditional Aborigines. These factors significantly impact upon the cost of delivery of education. This is further compounded by the remoteness and dispersion of these students.

Commonwealth general recurrent and capital funding are used to supplement Northern Territory general education and capital provisions.

During 1990–91 the total expenditure for the Department of Education (excluding that on Technical and Further Education) was $199 million—an increase of $11 million, or 5.8 per cent over the previous year's expenditure of $188 million.

Non-government schools

Recurrent expenditure

Grants were received from both the Commonwealth and Territory Governments. In addition, fees paid by parents, and fund-raising activities contributed to the total revenue of the schools.

Industrial affairs

Teachers

The Structural Efficiency Principle Award Restructuring conducted through employer–employee working parties outcomes included:

a the implementation of a single salary scale with starting points commensurate with pre-service qualification. A cap applies to teachers with two- and three-year trained credentials;

b the creation of a new classroom-based teacher classification—the Advanced Skills Teacher Level 1. Entry to the classification is dependent on peer appraisal.

Non-teaching personnel

An extensive position evaluation process gave rise to reclassification of current positions and the creation of career paths for personnel in para-professional (technical) and clerical administration strands.

Trends in expenditure

Personnel-related costs increased significantly in 1991 (9 per cent) as a result of the implementation of measures under the Structural Efficiency Principle of Award Restructuring. Much of this burden has fallen on parents. Large upward variations in salary rates for teachers and non-teaching personnel distorted the relationship between the costs of human and material resources. It is projected that equilibrium will return in 1993.

Specific purpose programs

Government sector

The Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training, through the *States Grants Schools (Assistance) Act 1988*, provides funding to States and Territories for a number of specific purpose programs.

Country Areas Program

The Country Areas Program in the Northern Territory continues to emphasise developing ways of overcoming the adverse effects of isolation on primary and secondary students through the development of curriculum and the delivery of courses designed to equip both boys and girls with life skills comparable to those provided to students in non-remote areas.

Country Area schools are declared and funded on the basis of their relative access to educational services and opportunities to participate in social and cultural activities. In the Northern Territory many declared Country Area schools have students of very low socioeconomic status. Many of these schools are also eligible for Disadvantaged Students Program funding.

Due to the extent of the problems and limitations of national formula allocations, some initiatives have to be jointly funded by the two programs when the objectives are complementary to the respective guidelines.

There continues to be a demand for the provision of contemporary language-based resources and technology to support programs for NESB and ESL students but the program seeks to fund a broad spectrum of experiences.

Examples of activities:

- vernacular literacy—school-based computer software development;
- Mathematics Task Centre—problem-solving mathematics activities;
- school-based library resources and literature production;
- regional library resource services;
- health, outdoor activities, physical education and recreation, natural science, biology and environmental awareness.

Country Areas resource allocation formula

In 1991 the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training established a working party to review the allocation of resources in the Country Areas Program.

The working party developed recommendations that the national Country Areas Program resource allocation formula be amended to exclude populations within 100 kilometres of a 10,000 population centre and that a more objective weighting for distance be introduced.

Although these recommendations have as yet to be finalised, they go a long way towards addressing the concerns of the Northern Territory in regard to the equitable allocation of resources to the most remote communities in Australia.

Disadvantaged Schools Program (government)

As has been the case in previous years, submissions continued to reflect a community desire for contemporary language-based resources possessing a strong orientation toward practical applications to suitably equip students with those life skills necessary for their involvement in the broader community.

Strategies included curriculum development at both school and system levels in both standard and LOTE modes as well as vocational integration of disabled students through a Community Outreach Program.

The Disadvantaged Schools Program also continued to support staff development, computer awareness, health and physical education, science and mathematics and environmental projects.

Disadvantaged Schools Program Index of Disadvantage

The Northern Territory has continued to make representations to the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) to have the National Index of Disadvantage reviewed so that the current problems with the formula that severely discriminate against remote Aboriginal communities be addressed.

To date there is no indication that DEET is prepared to review this issue. However, it has been raised with the National Board of Employment, Education and Training Schools Council Task Force, which is examining the proposal to broadband specific purpose programs into a national Schools Equity Program. It is hoped that the Schools Council will support the Northern Territory on this longstanding inequity.

English as a Second Language Program (New Arrivals element)

The New Arrivals Intensive English Units Program of the Northern Territory Department of Education operates permanently in Darwin and a unit is established in Alice Springs when the need arises. The program is monitored on an ongoing basis in terms of ESL staffing, bilingual staffing support, resources and professional development of teachers. The Intensive English Units provide a comprehensive cross-curriculum program in English for students in years T–7 and years 8–12.

Commonwealth funding for the ESL New Arrivals Program was used primarily to provide specialist ESL teachers at a ratio of 1:10 as above-formula staff located in either the primary or the secondary Intensive English Units in Darwin.

Some funds were used for the purchase of teaching and learning resources.

English as a Second Language Program (General Support element)

The General Support element operates in most of the major centres, viz. Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine and Tennant Creek, and is subject to ongoing monitoring in terms of staffing, operational models, professional development of teachers and student placement and progress.

The current level of Commonwealth funding provides only minimal ESL support, with the Northern Territory Government meeting the main proportion of the costs of services for non-English speaking background (NESB) students in government schools.

The NT has the highest population percentage lacking proficiency in English with 30 per cent of the 5–19 age group having English as a second language. Twenty-two per cent of this group are students of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background who, although acknowledged by the Commonwealth to be eligible for funding under the program, have not been recognised by the Commonwealth in its level of allocation.

An increasingly significant factor placing strain on available funds is the number of Aboriginal students enrolling in urban schools. As their need of specialist ESL assistance is recognised to be of high priority, resources available to other groupings are adversely affected.

In 1991 Commonwealth funding was used primarily for the placement of ESL specialist teachers as above-formula staff in schools with identified needs.

English as a Second Language Program resource allocation

In 1991 the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) established a working party to review the allocation of resources in the English as a Second Language Program (ESL). Based on legislative requirements and the DEET Administrative Guidelines for Schools, the working party agreed that Aborigines are to be included in the resource allocation methodology, although this has yet to be finalised. However, the inclusion of Aborigines is a legal requirement and urgently needs to be implemented to satisfy the Northern Territory's longstanding concerns with the current national ESL resource allocation.

Special Education Program (Schools Support—government)

The Commonwealth Special Education Program supplemented services provided by the Northern Territory Department of Education, primarily aimed at the integration of disabled children into mainstream classes in regular schools and improvement of the delivery and quality of services provided.

The program supported a broad range of projects including:

- provision of computer equipment to:
  - –enable students to meet the demands of senior primary and secondary school writing
  - –provide practical vocational skill training
  - –enhance classroom language and mathematics programs
  - –provide an enhanced program/client and reporting database for specialist staff
- provision of specialist staff, and special education and guidance staff assistance to teachers in remote areas;
- professional development through teacher effectiveness training and interstate contact through conferences and specialist courses;
- provision of support staff on a one-to-one basis;
- provision of teaching and assessment materials and equipment.

Special Education Program (Intervention Support)

This joint government and non-government program aimed to assist children to gain access to educational services and where possible to integrate into mainstream preschools and schools. Projects supported include:

- facilitating the visit to Alice Springs by a team from the Darwin Seating Clinic to benefit students with severe physical disabilities;
- provision of computer equipment and software to assist in communication development for profoundly deaf children;

- provision of part-time program coordinators and assistants to implement school and community integration and playgroup projects;
- establishment of a safe outdoor play area for early-intervention children, including equipment available for loan to parents.

Students at Risk Program

Commonwealth funding for the Students at Risk Program has enabled the Northern Territory to set up a program designed to meet the needs of students with behavioural problems in high schools and upper primary schools.

Pilot schools participating in the program were Anzac High (Alice Springs), Alice Springs High, Tennant Creek High and the year 6/7 students from their feeder primary schools. Sadadeen High and Yirara College were serviced on a needs basis.

A total of 299 students have received direct or group assistance to date and teachers have benefited through in-servicing and support in classroom and behaviour management that has enabled skill development in preventative techniques to be pursued.

All year 8 and 9 students who participated in the program in 1991 are still at school (year 10) and have indicated their willingness and ability to continue through to year 11 in 1993.

The program is also valuable in that additional students have derived indirect benefit through the enhancement of teacher skills and confidence.

Literacy and Learning Project 1991

Two project officers were appointed for the first three months from October to December to establish the Curriculum and Assessment Division. They:

- identified the subject areas to be involved in the Literacy anf Learning Project, through discussions with Principal Education Officers and subject seniors in government and non-government schools (including Sanderson and Darwin High Schools and St John's College);
- identified as the focus for the professional developmental program the language demands of the moderated tasks in social education and science. This was achieved through moderation meetings, liaison with subject specialists and visits to schools;
- planned the outline of the professional development program and suggested ways it could be implemented in junior secondary schools.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

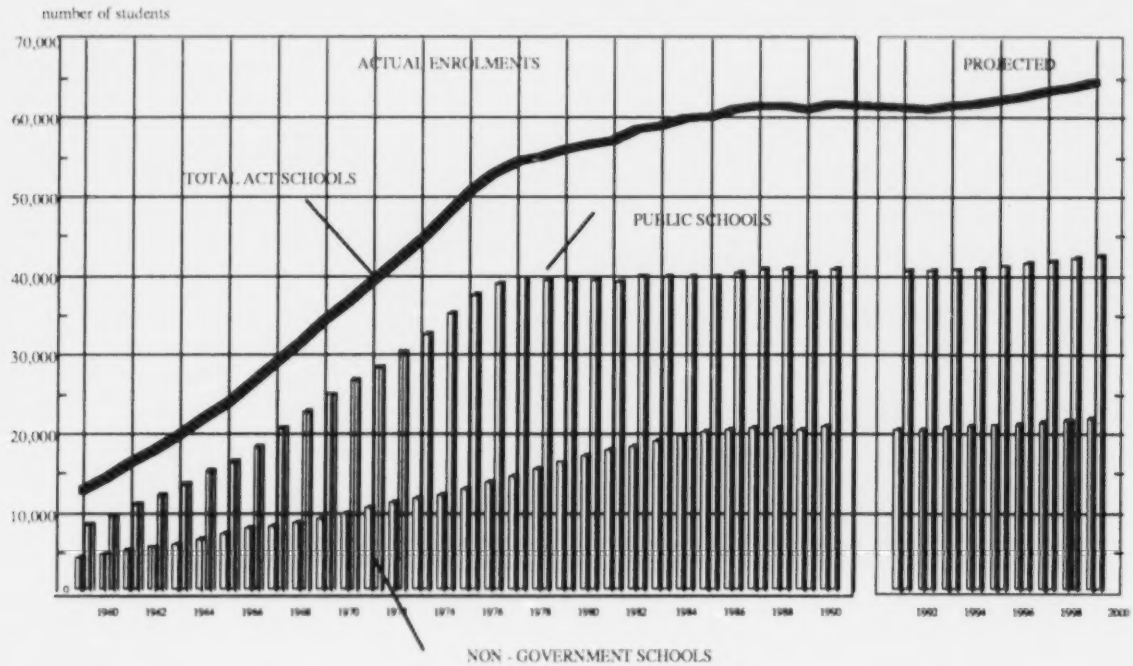
Introduction

The fabric of education in the ACT is influenced by many factors. As a small geographic region the ACT has a closeness and proximity which allows and encourages a high degree of contact and cross-fertilisation of ideas so that it is possible to react quickly to national developments in curriculum, professionally develop teachers centrally, regionally or at the school level and work closely with post-compulsory institutions such as TAFE and universities. In December 1991 the ACT had an estimated resident population of 292,700 and, with four higher education institutions and an extensive TAFE system, many people in the ACT are directly affected by what happens in the compulsory and non-compulsory fields of education.

The ACT was created to be the centre for Commonwealth government and the diplomatic service in Australia. ACT schooling is influenced by factors such as ethnicity, family socioeconomic status and long-term labour market demands as illustrated by a relatively high percentage of non-English speaking background (NESB) residents, a higher than average socioeconomic status and a labour market influenced by the Commonwealth Public Service structure. In addition, the ACT has regional responsibilities in providing employment and services, such as education and health care, to residents in surrounding areas of NSW.

The provision of high-quality educational services in the ACT is the goal of government, Catholic and independent schools. All schools place great emphasis on the quality of their pedagogical delivery to students, their productive outcomes and the vision in their outlook.

Figure 1. Student enrolments by sector, ACT, July 1960 to 2000



Source: July Schools Census and Department of Education projections

A total of 132 schools operated in the ACT in 1991. They consisted of 93 government schools with 40,780 students and 2,756 teachers and 39 non-government schools with 20,876 students and 1,232 teachers, giving a total for ACT of 61,656 students and 3,988 teachers. Overall enrolments for all ACT schools have risen gradually in recent years and are expected to rise further by the end of the century, as indicated in Figure 1.

Mission statements

Government, Catholic and independent schools in the ACT work in partnership with parents and the community to empower students to live in, and contribute to, a rapidly changing society and to act as responsible and independent children, young people and, later, self-sufficient adults who care about others and their environment.

Priority objectives for 1991

Government schooling

The Education Plan for ACT Public Schools 1991–1993 has the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia as its basic premise. The plan clearly outlines the directions ACT government schooling will take over the next three years. Core values and principles identified as fundamental to the provision of ACT government education are:

- quality and excellence;
- fairness, equity and equality;
- community participation;
- cohesion and responsiveness;
- social and cultural consciousness;
- openness and accountability.

The four specific goals identified in the Education Plan demand quality in: leadership and management; curriculum; teachers and the teaching and learning environment; and the partnership between the department, schools and their communities.

Priority objectives, which relate directly to the specified goals, were established by the 1991 Action Plan. Priority objectives for government schools in 1991 were to:

- develop inspired and positive leadership and management practices responsive to the changing administration of education;
- develop curriculum which ensures that students have access to a diverse range of learning processes and achieve high-quality learning outcomes;
- improve the conditions of teaching;
- provide an educational environment which is conducive to maximum learning;
- achieve community involvement in creating an environment which maximises the opportunity for success in schooling and demonstrates commitment to the school's values and principles.

Non-government schooling

Priority objectives for non-government schools in 1991 were to:

- maximise the competence, efficiency and confidence of teachers;
- provide better feedback to the school community and to involve the community in school operations;
- maximise the general competencies of students, particularly in literacy and numeracy skills;
- maximise learning for all students;
- increase participation in key subject areas, particularly in the areas of physical education, computer science, languages other than English, and science;
- increase the participation and achievement of disadvantaged groups of students;
- broaden the educational experiences of girls, especially in ways which increase their subsequent education, training and employment options;
- facilitate the transition of students between levels of education and from education to employment;
- provide opportunities for the continuing professional development of teachers;
- develop a range of skills, including reasoning, enquiry, problem solving and independent learning skills;
- provide better support services, for example counselling.

Additional priority objectives set by the Catholic Education Office for their systemic schools in 1991 were to:

- further assist school communities to base their organisation and curriculum on the teaching of Jesus and His church;
- improve the quality of communication between the Catholic Education Office, schools and their communities, so that the nation of service underpins the relational and professional interactions of these partners.

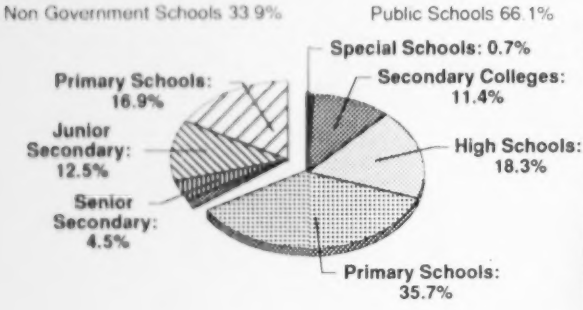
Guiding principles

The guiding principles which provide direction for ACT education are based on: quality of service delivery; choice and diversity; community involvement; and, in government schools, extensive networking based on regional clusters.

ACT government, Catholic and independent schools aim to provide a purposeful and productive general education of the highest quality to all students. Areas of focus for quality in schools are: leadership and management; curriculum; teachers and the teaching and learning environment; and the partnership between schools and their communities. Vocational needs of students are addressed through the provision of employment-related courses in years 11 and 12 and the expansion of links between schools and TAFE.

The educational fabric of the ACT is enhanced by the wide diversity of educational options available to students and parents in the ACT, including government, Catholic and independent schools. Figure 2 shows the distribution of students between government and non-government schools. The participation rate of students in Catholic schools is higher than any other State or Territory, a reflection of the high proportion of Catholics in the ACT community.

Figure 2. Students in ACT schools, August 1991

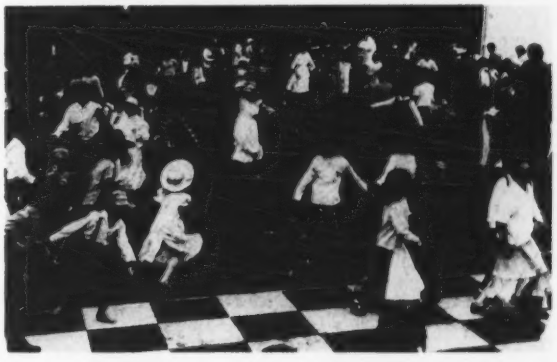


Source: August Schools Census

Community participation in the education process is highly valued and encouraged. Levels of input by parents depend on the sector concerned and the issues involved. As the priority objectives of all sectors show, parents are regarded as the first and most influential educators of their children. In the ACT they have been empowered to contribute to decisions about their children's education through school boards and parent associations. By this process community expectations are frequently reflected in school policy. In 1991 parents were involved in a number of system initiatives such as school reshaping, ACT Schools Restructuring Task Force, School-Based Management Working Party and School Review. These initiatives are discussed in detail elsewhere in this report.

There was a high level of community input to the High School Development Program. In 1991 the major focus for the improvement of government school education centred on the high school sector. The High School Development Reference Group was formed in 1991 to carry through the work emanating from the High School Principals' Workshop. The reference group comprised representatives from the Australian Teachers' Union (ACT Branch), the P&C Council, principals associations, students associations, the University of Canberra and the Department of Education. A discussion paper which focused on the principal issues affecting the development of high schools in the ACT was developed and disseminated widely through the Canberra community for comment. A synthesis was made of the responses and the reference group, using these responses and other material from research into high schools, began the task of developing a set of recommendations for the improvement of high schools which, in turn, was designed to lead to the development of a longer term plan for high schools.

Another area of significant community involvement in 1991 was in the post-compulsory years of schooling. During 1990 consultation was undertaken with colleges, resulting in the issues paper *Future Directions of Secondary Colleges*. Most submissions emphasised the positive achievements made and supported evolutionary development rather than any dramatic or notable changes in direction for secondary colleges. This paper was circulated for comment and discussion during 1991. However, a seminar for senior secondary principals, from government and non-government schools, in 1991, placed increased emphasis on the need for a culture of change and a futures orientation in line with the recommendations of the Finn Report.



Community Day

Four regional school support centres, established in 1988 for government schools, continued to provide a source of support, ensuring the realisation of planned educational outcomes for children as well as the provision of a framework for educational accountability. Government schools established approximately ten networks or clusters consisting of a secondary college, the high schools and primary schools which feed into it. Extensive professional development was undertaken in the regions and teachers in these groups of schools met regularly to develop methods of enhancing curriculum development and service delivery in areas such as the implementation of frameworks, computing, science and the arts.

Accountability

During 1991 a range of accountability measures was undertaken to ensure that educational delivery in ACT schools was of the highest standard.

School Review

The program of School Review operating in ACT government schools is for school improvement and future planning, accountability and public confidence. The program was first introduced in 1990 and all schools are expected to be reviewed once in a five-year cycle. The effectiveness of the school is addressed from five key perspectives: management, programs, school climate, student welfare and management, and education outcomes. As a result of School Review each school prepares:

- a review report for its own use which documents the findings of the review—the strengths and areas for development and the recommendations which flow from these findings;
- a development plan for the next four years which takes into account the findings of the review.

During this review process, each school also receives:

- an analysis of the school's curriculum documentation, prepared by curriculum experts;
- the endorsement of the review report and development plan by the Deputy Secretary of the department.

The School Performance Review and Development Section produces:

- public reports comprising a summary of the school's review report and development plan;
- aggregated data which may be used for systemic accountability and development purposes.

During 1991, 16 government primary schools and 5 high schools participated in the School Review process. In 1992 secondary colleges and special schools will also become part of the review program.

Teacher, student and parent responses from the 1991 School Review data show that each group responded favourably to a broad range of questions on what was happening in their school. Overall primary school responses were slightly more positive than high school responses.

Some areas where less favourable responses were given included: students wanting greater respect for property, high school teachers identifying the need for more emphasis on professional development and parents wanting more information about class activities.

Figure 3. Teacher responses from School Review (293 responses)

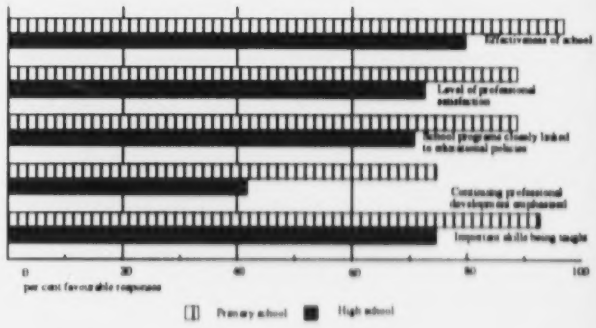


Figure 4. Student responses from School Review (1,658 responses)

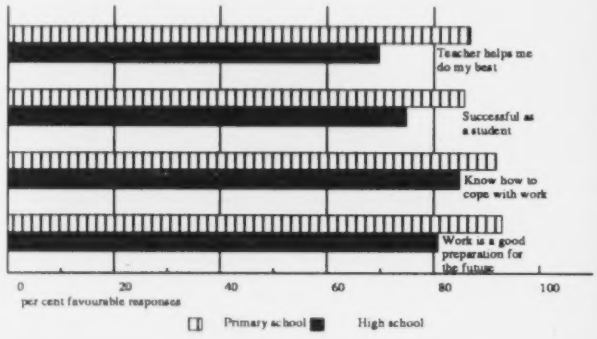
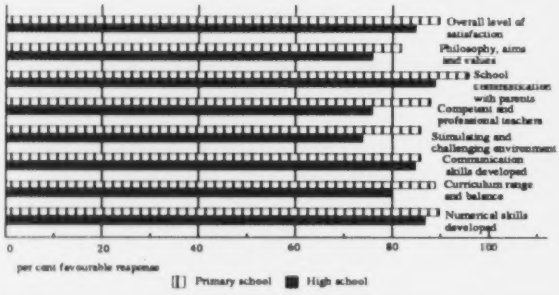


Figure 5. Parent responses from School Review (3,059 responses)



Non-government registration

Non-government schools are required to be registered at all levels (primary, junior secondary and senior secondary) under the *Education Act 1937*. Registration involves assessment of curriculum programs and physical facilities by appropriately qualified persons who represent the

Catholic system, independent schools, tertiary institutions and the government school system. Approval is for periods of up to five years. In 1991 five primary schools were registered, four being renewals and one being registered for the first time. Four high schools and four secondary colleges had their registrations renewed. One secondary school, applying for the first time, had its registration provisionally approved.

School renewal

A process of school renewal was trialled in one primary Catholic school in 1991, involving a critical and sustained examination of its effectiveness. One secondary Catholic school commenced school renewal late in 1991. School renewal is a joint project undertaken cooperatively by the Catholic Education Office, staff and parents of the schools involved. In the trial program for the primary school, 85 per cent of respondents rated their school, on a five-point scale, in the 'high' to 'very high' achievement range on most school goals. The renewal process serves the major purposes of school development and future planning, and the enhancement of confidence in the operation of individual schools. A significant number of schools are expected to undertake school renewal in 1992 and the remainder will be introduced to the program over a five-year cycle.

Teacher Review and Development (TRAD)

Eleven ACT government schools trialled TRAD models during 1991. In 1992 schools will develop an appropriate TRAD model based on the school's philosophy, the teacher's duties and the policies of the system. The model should include: formal analysis of the teacher's current duties and position in the school; a written self-evaluation in accordance with the agreed model(s); selection of a peer appraiser; inclusion of career planning and professional development aspects; and evaluation of an agreed range of aspects of performance. All staff, with the exception of beginning teachers or teachers in special circumstances, will be involved in a regular TRAD process over a two-year period.

Certification and credentialling

Students in the ACT receive various forms of certification and credentials during the latter years of their schooling. The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies provides accreditation and certification services for years 11 and 12 to all government secondary colleges, ACT non-government schools, two schools in Papua-New Guinea and the ACT Institute of TAFE year 12 program. The board is responsible for the year 12 Certificate, Employment (E) Course Certificate, Tertiary Entrance Statement (TES), and Secondary College Record (SCR). In addition, the board is responsible for issuing the year 10 Certificate.

Excellence and equity

An extensive range of students attends ACT schools. For example, in 1991 government schools included 321 children of diplomats, 360 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 50 students on scholarships at the Australian Institute of Sport, children of visiting academics at various tertiary institutions, students on AUSTUDY (up to 21 per cent of total student population at one secondary college), 12,218 students from a non-English speaking background, 865 students from NSW, 6,360 students with special needs, and 108 full-fee paying overseas students. One secondary college in the ACT offers the International Baccalaureate for students in years 11 and 12.

In addition, preschooling is offered in the ACT to all children aged 4 by 30 April for the 12 months prior to their entry to school. Places are also available to allow students with particular social and language needs to begin preschooling at age 3. Preschool is non-compulsory in the ACT but a high proportion of 4-year-old children attend, normally in four half-day sessions per week. In 1991, 3,990 preschool students were enrolled in 76 ACT government preschools, representing a participation rate of 91 per cent of the birth rates four years earlier. With this early start to schooling and high retention rates in the later years of schooling, the majority of ACT students spend nearly 14 years at school.

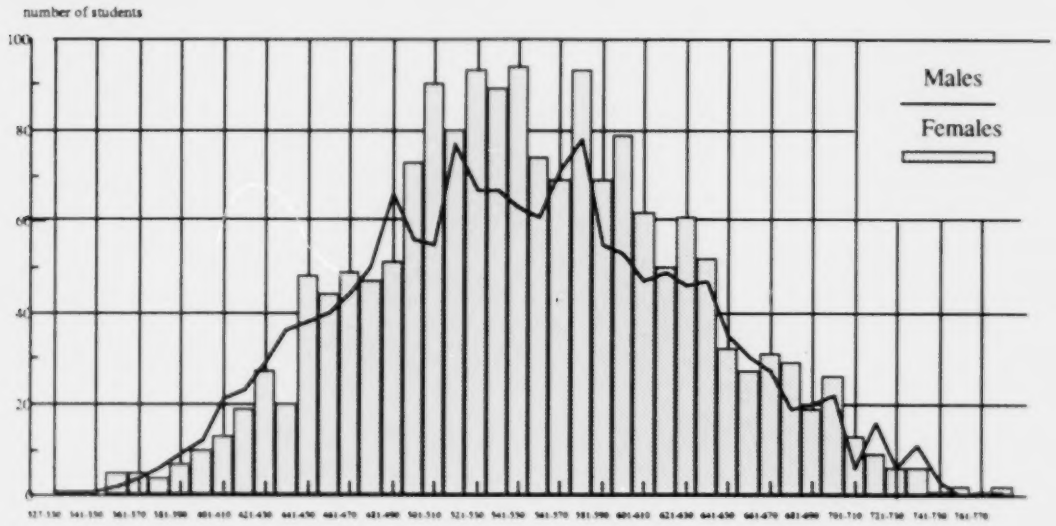
Fairness, equity and equality are core values and principles for the provision of educational services in the ACT. Government, Catholic and independent schools aim to provide educational resources, processes and structures which cater for the full range of student needs and abilities, a wide variety of post-school destinations, cultural diversity and social unity, a rapidly changing society and education system, and family mobility.

Systematic information about excellence in ACT education is regularly produced from School Review data, Tertiary Entrance Scores and apparent retention rates, and diversity and participation rates in curriculum offerings.

In 1991 the School Review process asked teachers about the effectiveness of their government school and parents about their satisfaction with the government school their children attended. Ninety-seven per cent of primary school teachers and 80 per cent of high school teachers found their school to be effective. Ninety per cent of primary school parents and 85 per cent of high school parents expressed satisfaction with their child's school.

Secondary colleges provided students with diverse curriculum offerings and encouraged them to be responsible for their learning. Catholic and independent schools catered for senior students within their year 7–12 structure and one school offers the NSW Higher School Certificate. Emphasis was placed on high standards of achievement and ACT students proceeding to tertiary studies achieved very successful results. Figure 6 shows the Tertiary Entrance Scores obtained by ACT students in 1991.

Figure 6. Year 12 tertiary entrance scores, all ACT schools, 1991



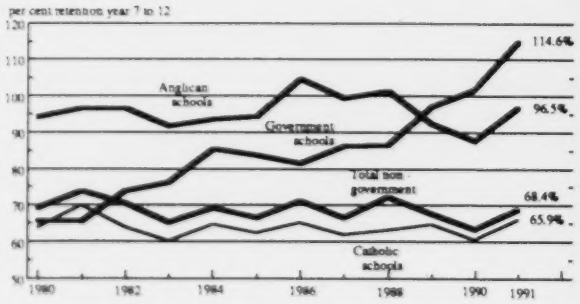
Source ACT Department of Education

In the ACT 3,235 students received a Tertiary Entrance Score in 1991, representing approximately 75 per cent of the year 12 student population in government and non-government schools. Of these, 1,668 students were offered places in a tertiary institution out of the 2,735 who applied for university entrance.

Overall apparent retention rates in the ACT were excellent and the highest in Australia. Figure 7 shows a rise in apparent retention rates in all ACT schools over recent years. An apparent discrepancy between the retention rates shown for government and non-government schools is explained by the fact that non-government schools do not have as many places available in years 11 and 12 as they have for year 10 students. In addition, some non-government schools do not offer programs beyond year 10. Thus, a number of non-government students complete their final years of schooling in the ACT government sector.

The quality and diversity offered in education in the ACT are important elements in meeting and satisfying the needs of students. Figure 8 shows that in 1991 students in the senior years of schooling in the ACT participated in a wide range of curriculum offerings. This reflected the importance placed on the diversity of student choice in selecting curriculum options and the quality of the curriculum that is developed at the school level using system expertise.

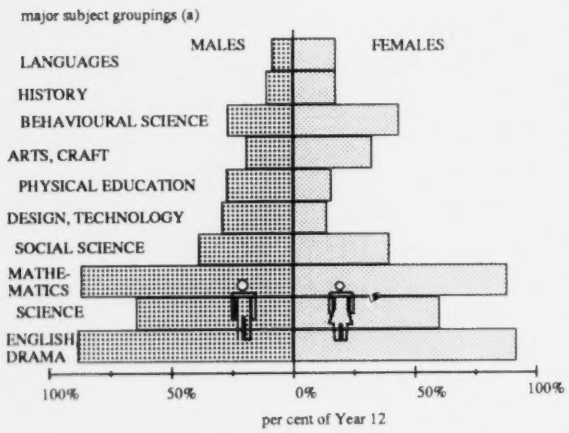
Figure 7. Apparent retention rates, years 7 to 12, 1980–91



Source ACT Department of Education

Figure 9 indicates the very high participation rates for both males and females in the senior secondary years. The chart, based on the ratio of students to the ACT population of the same age, clearly indicates that students in the ACT are participating at a much higher rate in the final years of schooling than elsewhere in Australia. This is, in part, a measure of the satisfaction that ACT students have that their education is meeting their needs and preparing them for the future.

Figure 8. Year 12 participation in courses, all ACT schools, 1991



(a) For tertiary entrance students only

Source: Derived from ACT Year 12 Study

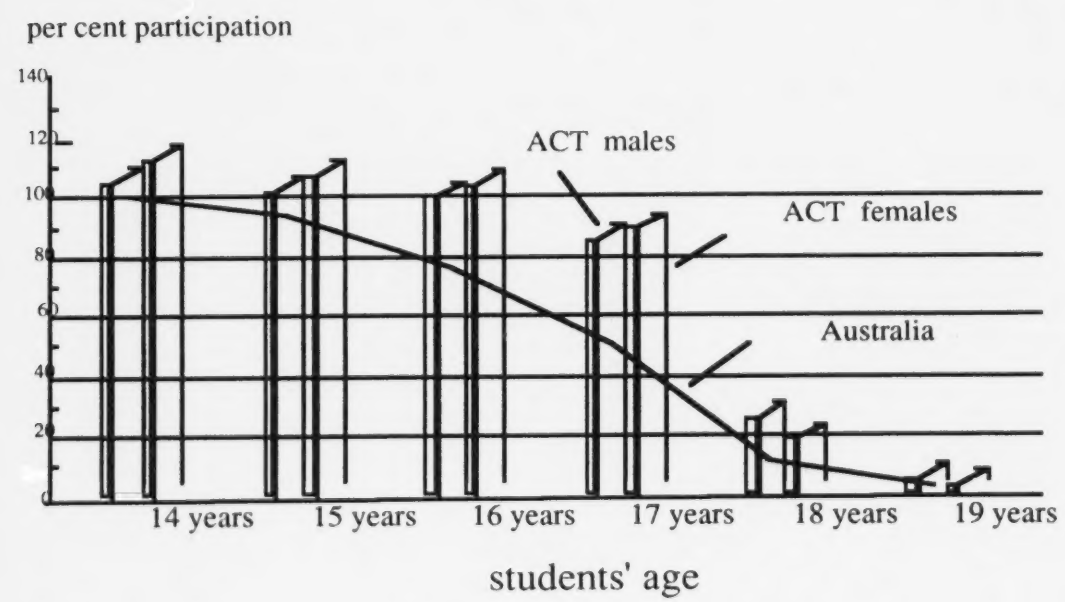
In addition, some colleges in the ACT effectively operate as day and night schools. In 1991, 1,818 students enrolled in evening classes run by four secondary colleges. These enrolments incorporated students doing courses for tertiary preparation (76 per cent), courses for general study (15 per cent) or special courses such as typing for the blind, lip reading and remedial reading/maths (9.0 per cent). These figures do not include the large number of students who undertake evening recreation classes conducted by school communities.

For disadvantaged groups in the ACT, access and participation are key strategies. During 1991 special initiatives were undertaken in the important areas of educational provision for girls, education for NESB students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, and special needs education.

Educational provision for girls

Educational provision for girls in the ACT is given high priority through the implementation of the National Policy for the Education of Girls, which included raising awareness of the needs of girls, developing appropriate curriculum, and ensuring a supportive environment for girls and the equitable distribution of resources.

Figure 9. Age participation rates, 1991



Source: ACT Department of Education

In 1991 the ACT Department of Education placed a major emphasis on the development of gender-inclusive curriculum. To this end government schools received assistance during curriculum development initiatives and when specific gender-related policies were being implemented. The department's gender-equity consultant provided support through a range of professional development activities. Seven gender-equity in-service courses were conducted with an average of 20 participants at each session. Thirty-five school-based in-service programs were also delivered. Of these, 20 were to whole-school staff groups, five were to faculty groups and ten were to gender-equity committees in schools.

In addition, gender equity was deliberately included as an across-curriculum perspective for each of the curriculum frameworks when they were developed during 1991. As part of the process of government School Review, curriculum documents were analysed and comments made on how well the documents reflected gender-equity principles and how they might be improved in the future.

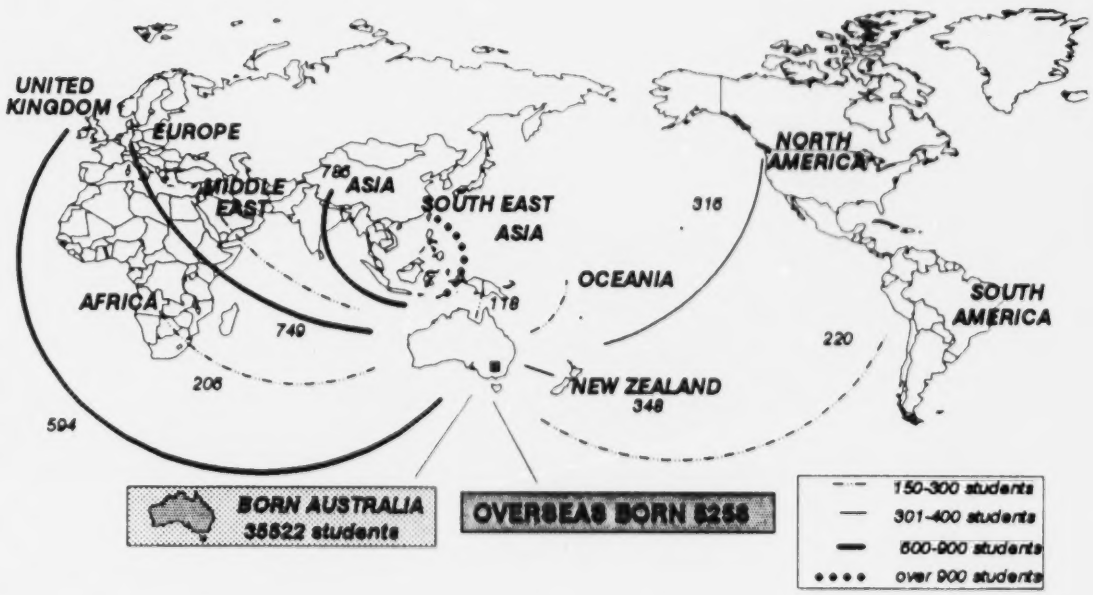
Assisting schools to deal with the issue of sexual harassment was also a major government school system focus in 1991. This was implemented with the objective of developing a supportive environment for girls in schools. Initiatives to support this project were: consultation on a draft policy relating to sexual harassment of/among students; establishment of a working group to develop guidelines for dealing with incidents of sexual harassment; and the nomination of 180 teachers by their schools as sexual harassment contact officers for students together with their professional development on topics including the role of the contact officer, the draft student policy and the implementation of procedures for responding to student complaints of sexual harassment.

Finally, in 1991 the Board of Senior Secondary Studies implemented a new method of scaling scores for the purpose of calculating Tertiary Entrance Scores to redress inequities resulting from gender bias. As a result of this initiative, undertaken after three years of research, 54 girls achieved places in the top 100 ACT students in 1991 compared to 37 girls in the top 100 in 1990.

Education for students from a non-English speaking background (NESB)

In 1991, 30 per cent of school students came from a non-English speaking background. These students were either born in a non-English speaking country or had at least one parent who was born in a non-English speaking country. Figure 10 reveals that the Asian and South East Asian regions provided the largest number of students born overseas.

Figure 10. Students' birthplaces, ACT government schools, August 1991



Source: August census

The allocation of English as a Second Language (ESL) resources in ACT government schools is based on the annual Language Performance Rating (LPR) process. In this process, ESL students are rated in the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) against English speaking background (ESB) students of the same age and grade. The delivery of ESL programs occurs in both mainstream and intensive language centres. In 1991 a total of 1,944 students participated in specialist ESL programs across all government sectors. In addition, 502 students graduated from Introductory English Centres (IECs) where they received intensive language teaching prior to entry into mainstream schools. These centres catered for students K–12, in the 5 to 20 plus age range. The Department of Education also provided a summer school for 190 NESB students to maintain their language development while schools were on vacation. The principal criterion for enrolment in the summer school was lack of English language proficiency and priority was given to students who were enrolled in an IEC or had recently graduated from an IEC.

Input was made to the consultation process for the development of national curriculum statements to ensure that the needs of ESL students were included in these developments. To support young children from a non-English speaking background a Preschool ESL Student Identification Procedure was developed and trialled in 1991, for implementation in 1992. In this way, the needs of NESB students can be provided for as soon as they begin primary school.

Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

In 1991 a total of 397 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attended ACT schools, 360 in government schools and 37 in non-government schools. Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) children in the ACT occurs within a general schooling system which is based on a different, dominant culture. To redress this, work commenced on modifying schools' curricula to take into account the specific needs, interests and strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Through Commonwealth funding, the ACT Department of Education employed two home–school liaison officers and three Aboriginal Education assistants in 1991. The role of the home–school liaison officers was to provide a link between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, their home and their school. The three Aboriginal Education assistants were located in one high school and two primary schools. They provided support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within the school by focusing on their educational needs and assisting them and their families with communication with their peers, teachers and the department. In addition, an Aboriginal Mentors Program operated in 1991. Aboriginal mentors were employed to work in schools with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who had behavioural problems and/or learning difficulties. An Aboriginal artist-in-residence worked in schools to promote cultural identity and act as a focal point for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This program also served to raise the awareness of all students to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in these schools. In 1991 the special program operating at Narrabundah Early Childhood Education Centre was expanded to include a program for 4-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Professional development in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education was also provided for ACT government teachers. Eleven centrally run in-service courses were conducted with an average attendance of 15 teachers, and four government schools provided in-service courses to their whole staff.

During 1991 the Catholic Education Office conducted an action research project which focused on improving teaching and learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The findings of this ongoing pilot program were disseminated in two workshops for all teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Catholic Education Office Aboriginal Education team, comprising its Aboriginal education consultant, the Aboriginal education research teacher and the Aboriginal home education consultant, conducted these workshops aimed at increasing teachers' knowledge, methodology and skills in delivering programs on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, identity, and past and present societies. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander home–school liaison officer involved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the outcomes of the program and gained their participation in defining the program's ongoing direction. As a result, processes were developed and consultations took place within the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community for the establishment of a Catholic Education System Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy. The development of a second policy draft commenced late in 1991.

Education for students with special needs

The many students in the ACT who were identified as having special needs were catered for in a variety of settings in 1991. In government schools the majority of these students (4,301) received their education in mainstream classes, often with the support of specialist teachers. Of the remainder, 473 were educated in special schools.

Two pilot programs added to the integration of students with special needs in mainstream schools. At the beginning of 1991, the senior section of the Woden School, which caters for students with a mild intellectual disability, was located in a mainstream college. During term 4, 1991, an early intervention unit was established in a mainstream preschool. This unit provided a special program for 3- and 4-year-olds who had mild but specific developmental delays, to prepare them to enter mainstream preschool and primary schools where possible.

In 1991 full-time resource teachers were allocated to 23 government primary schools. They provided support for students and parents. These teachers provided services to students with learning and communication difficulties, behaviour problems, different learning styles or development rates, extension programs, and/or specific short-term programs. Resource teachers in the ACT worked closely with counsellors and curriculum consultants to establish a number of regionally based programs, such as the Tuggeranong network for gifted and talented students, parent training and protective behaviours programs. Budget restraints in 1991 constrained the programs.

Learning assistance was provided at the high school level, based on approximately 10 per cent of the mainstream population of government high schools in a given year. Students are assessed in year 8 to determine the level of support required in years 9 and 10. The exit rate of students returning to mainstream classes from learning assistance classes was 32 per cent in 1991.

The Reading Recovery Program, first implemented in 1984, operated in ACT government schools in 1991. This program, based on early intervention, is directed towards providing intensive, individual assistance for children experiencing difficulty learning to read and write after one year at school. During 1991 more than 434 students were assisted by the program provided by 57 ACT government primary schools.

Itinerant teachers work with special needs students, such as students with sensory impairment and behavioural difficulties, in ACT mainstream schools. Two Communication Disorder classes, three Hearing Impaired units and eleven Junior Assessment classes also operated in mainstream schools to cater for 130 students. As well, 22 Learning Centres provided for 146 students in primary schools and 184 students in high schools and 64 students passed through the Behaviour Management Support Program.

Within the Catholic system 40 primary and 8 secondary students were educated in an integration program in mainstream classes, with a further 26 disabled primary students identified for participation in a special needs support program.

General and vocational education

ACT schools have traditionally focused on providing students with a broad-based general education. Recent national trends in curriculum and development have emphasised vocational education, such as employment courses. Following the release of the Finn Report, schools are aware that a shift in focus to competencies, greater vocational orientation and the incorporation of industry-recognised modules into the curriculum will require the direct involvement of many teachers at schools level, necessitating a great deal of in-servicing and training, as well as input from students, parents and the community. In a period of budget constraints, concern was expressed about the time and resources necessary to implement these developments.

Vocational education has a high priority in ACT schools. Providing students with knowledge and skills to assist them with their transition to the world of work has seen the development and implementation of many successful Employment (E) courses. Schools, employers, parents, unions, TAFE and the Department of Education work in partnership through the Employment Reference Group (ERG) to develop and implement these courses. The ERG ensures that suitable competency-based performance indicators are included in each course. At one secondary college four E courses involved units that were taught at TAFE.

In 1991, 1,029 Employment (E) Certificates were awarded to 581 male students and 448 female students. As well as receiving an E Certificate upon successfully completing their E course, students were also eligible for advanced standing for certain TAFE units.

Careers education and work experience programs made significant contributions to the breadth of students' learning. The annual Careers Market and Tertiary Orientation Program (TOP) held at Bruce TAFE, in July 1991, attracted students from the ACT and south-eastern region of NSW. Over the three days, approximately 10,000 students visited the display, which included displays from 30 tertiary institutions and over 70 stalls providing occupational information.

Professional development was provided to ACT teachers in the areas of work experience and careers. This involved 24 newly appointed work experience coordinators being trained in the use of the centralised computer system. Approximately 50 teachers attended four careers/work experience meetings and the annual Labour Market and Industry Training Seminar. In-servicing on careers was also provided for 30 ESL teachers to assist ESL students with careers education.

The ACT Work Experience Program for school students placed over 6,000 students with a variety of ACT and interstate employers during 1991. Of these, approximately 220 students were either physically or learning disabled. In ACT government schools 100 students travelled interstate for their work experience.

The Job and Course Explorer database is being developed for the ACT and NSW by the NSW Department of Industrial Relations, Further Education and Training in conjunction with the NSW Job and Course (JAC) and should be available for use in 1992. This is an extensive software package which will provide career and course information for ACT students. The small size of the ACT has made it desirable to work in collaboration with NSW on this project.

The ACT was represented in the National Career Education Working Party and contributed to the draft statement of national goals for career education.

Areas of student learning

National curriculum

The ACT was actively involved in national collaborative curriculum developments with representation on the steering committees for English language and the arts, and participation in the consultative process for technology and studies of society and the environment.

The particular nature of the ACT system, where curriculum is developed at individual schools, provides a large pool of teachers with well-honed curriculum development expertise. Two ACT teachers were engaged during 1991 on a collaboration with the South Australian Education Department on the development of the English language statement and profiles. A third was the main writer for the science statement.

ACT curriculum

Curriculum development and decision making in ACT schools is school based and is undertaken by teachers in consultation with students, parents and the local community through school boards. In government primary and high schools this decision making takes place within a context of developmental policies, K–10 curriculum frameworks and curriculum statements developed by the department's Curriculum Section. Curriculum frameworks relate to the eight areas of learning, whereas curriculum statements are based on across curriculum perspectives and do not deal with subject-specific content matter. The establishment of regional clusters based on a college, its feeder high schools and their feeder primary schools has seen the development of approximately ten regional networks. These networks have played a key role in the implementation of curriculum frameworks and in providing professional development for teachers.

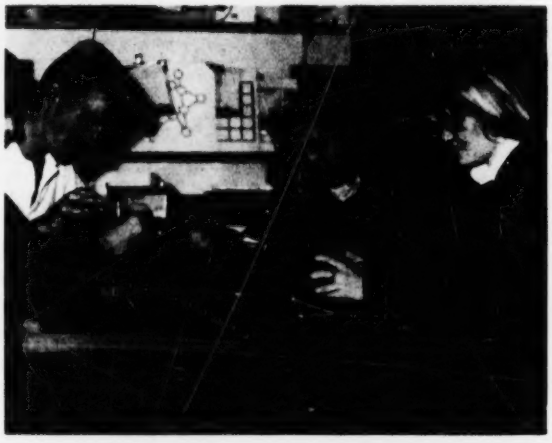
As part of the School Review process, in government schools, the Curriculum Section examines and evaluates all aspects of the curricula of schools undergoing review.

In years 11 and 12 all government and nearly all non-government schools engage in a process of course development and accreditation through the Board of Senior Secondary Studies. Teachers from all sectors work collaboratively in curriculum development and on accreditation panels. This process provides direct links with the universities and TAFE.

In 1991 the Curriculum Section had 23 consultants who were responsible for the eight areas of student learning and across-curriculum perspectives. They play a significant role in the continuing development of K–10 curriculum frameworks. Nine across-curriculum perspectives provide additional guidance in gender, language ability and cultural background as issues to be considered by teachers when writing courses and developing curricula. The full implementation of curriculum frameworks is expected to provide students with a much smoother transition from primary school to high school.

In 1991, as a new initiative, a whole-curriculum consultant was appointed with the role of overseeing aspects of the curriculum such as balance, coherence and connection, equity and access. These aspects of the curriculum were formally evaluated in the School Review process and, in 1991, a central in-service course on this new initiative was attended by 30 teachers from primary, high and secondary colleges in the government system.

In a system as small as the ACT, the Department of Education is able to provide a wide range of professional development in-services to keep government school teachers abreast of the latest national trends. In addition local subject associations, made up of government and non-government teachers, are extremely active. They provide forums for the discussion of contemporary curriculum issues; run in-services for members; provide information from national bodies; and run local and national conferences.



Students engaged in learning

Across-curriculum perspectives

All curriculum decision making in ACT government schools incorporates nine across-curriculum perspectives, specifically gender equity, information technology, Aboriginal studies, work education, environment education, Australian studies, special needs education, multicultural studies, and language for understanding across the curriculum. During 1991, curriculum statements were being developed for most of these perspectives. The environment statement was completed and six in-services were held to professionally develop teachers on this statement.

Special projects were also undertaken, such as the Language for Understanding across the Curriculum (LUAC) Project and the Continuing Literacy Program (CLP). Initiatives were undertaken to identify the needs of non-English speaking background (NESB) students and provide professional development for teachers. Seven high schools, featuring a total of 120 participants, completed the LUAC secondary school professional development course in 1991. LUAC Tutor Training workshops were held, which trained eight teachers to be a valuable resource for ESL in schools.

In response to the School Review process for government schools, the LUAC consultant worked as part of a team developing a professional development package to support schools and clusters in their implementation of across-curriculum perspectives.

Initiatives were taken to raise the profile of information technology (IT) in the education community. In 1991 the emphasis for IT was on establishing and developing regional networks which focused on a 'train the trainer' approach whereby teachers were trained in IT by experts outsiders, then acted as key personnel in both their schools and their regions by conducting in-service programs for their colleagues. The net result of this has been a pool of teachers trained in IT who can provide more support in this area for teachers. In addition, 33 central in-service courses, dealing with aspects of IT, were conducted during 1991 with approximately 20 participants attending each session.

In Catholic schools specialist resource teachers were involved in training parents to assist in a wide variety of tutor programs, such as the Parents as Tutors (PAT) Program, and workshop sessions to equip parents to assist individual children or small groups of children in a specific area for short sessions each week.

Key Learning Areas

Considerable emphasis was placed on the development of the eight curriculum framework areas in 1991. In government schools systematic training supports the implementation of the framework for each area of learning.

English

English aims to develop in students the skills of English language and literacy, including skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing. In 1991, ten government schools which undertook cyclic review of their English or language arts curriculum documents, were in-serviced on the *ACT English Language Curriculum Framework*.

Major issues in 1991 in the ACT primary sector were the teaching of oral language and the teaching and learning of a range of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Attention focused on finding assessment methods integrated with classroom activities and giving more detailed profiles of student progress. Five secondary schools moved towards a more holistic approach to language learning based on literature. Some secondary schools introduced aspects of criterion-based assessment.

In 1991 professional development was provided to teachers in government and non-government schools in the Continuing Literacy Program (CLP). The six-unit program was delivered to eleven primary and four high schools. Almost all ACT schools have completed the program that was first introduced in 1987. Work also began on a nationally funded new project about the nature of teacher in-service in literacy. This was undertaken jointly with the ACT government school system, the Catholic Education Office and the South Coast region of NSW.

Following a very successful locally run national conference in 1990, the ACT Association for the Teaching of English (ACTATE) saw its membership rise to 154 in 1991. All members received information on national trends and teaching methods through the national journal and a local publication *ACTIVATE*. Further professional development in English was offered through an annual weekend conference, a mini conference, evening meetings and after-dinner speakers (210 places were filled at these offerings). As part of Litfest, act students' writing was published in a book titled *The Line Is Drawn*.

LOTE

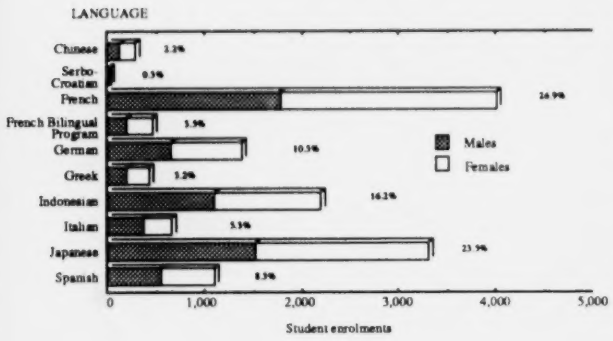
LOTE aims to develop in students a knowledge of languages other than English. LOTE was identified as a priority area in 1991. An action plan circulated by the ACT Department of Education envisaged that all government schools, primary and secondary, would be offering a language other than English by the year 2000. From 1993 year 7 students in government schools will be required to complete a full year of study in at least one language instead of doing short 'taster' courses. In the future all government secondary schools will have to offer a high-quality Asian and European language program.

In government schools in 1991 there were 13,472 enrolments in languages which included Chinese, Croatian/Serbian, French, German, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese and Spanish. Figure 11 shows the number of students participating in various LOTE courses.

Prior to 1991, approximately 20 primary schools had established LOTE programs. In 1991 timelines were established for extending LOTE programs in primary schools, high schools and secondary colleges. Ten new programs opened in primary schools, and several high schools and colleges broadened their programs to include a choice of an Asian and European language.

Procedures were set up to establish regional networks to allow teachers to coordinate their K–12 LOTE programs. Regular workshops were held to develop an activities-based curriculum consistent with national guidelines, to develop teachers' language skills and methodology and to facilitate curriculum development. Thirty-two LOTE in-services were held during and after school hours with an

Figure 11. Languages other than English enrolments, ACT Government schools, June 1991



Source: Foreign Language Survey, June 1991

average attendance of 15 teachers. These sessions were attended by representatives from all government colleges, high schools and 26 primary schools.

Science

Science aims to develop in students an understanding of the role of science and technology in society, together with scientific and technological skills. During 1991 the *ACT Science Curriculum Framework* was extensively trialled in government schools. Students were actively involved in clubs, research schemes and competitions at both a local and national level to enhance and reinforce good classroom learning and teaching in science. Highlights included the ACT Science Fair, in which there were over 1,000 entries, and a national prize in the Earthworm Environmental Awards.

Quality curriculum in science is ensured by teacher participation in professional development provided by the Curriculum Section. Over 80 teachers from 20 primary schools attended three Science Network Courses (SINCs), which were developed in the ACT. At the secondary level 16 science teachers took part in in-services (comprising five sessions over several weeks) which focssed on classroom strategies, 25 teachers undertook a full day in-service and 80 teachers participated in five sessions of activities and ideas for teaching senior science.

Primary and secondary teachers participated in courses offered by the University of Canberra, Australian National University, National Science and Technology Centre, Academy of Science, ACT Institute of TAFE and the Science Teachers' Association of the ACT. In addition, the Department of Education successfully collaborated with the University of Canberra to produce the Primary and Early Childhood Science and Technology Education Program (PECSTEP), a course designed to enhance the teaching skills of primary school teachers.

Technology

Technology aims to develop in students skills in design and in using materials, tools and equipment to construct practical products. Technology in ACT government schools was an area of learning which experienced rapid change in 1991. The development of technology curriculum at school level was supported by the *ACT Technology Curriculum Framework* and professional development was offered to assist its implementation in schools. At the primary level the focus was on integrating technology into existing school programs. Experiential learning, using a wide variety of materials and equipment within the context of the designing, making and appraising process, was central to developments in the primary curriculum.

During 1991 design-based practical programs continued to function and be developed at both high schools and secondary colleges. A total of 147 teachers attended ten technology in-service courses which ranged from practical classroom activities for primary teachers to specialised courses in computer-aided design and drafting. School-based sessions covering whole school and faculties were run at nine schools, six in primary schools and three in high schools. Training packages which focus on specific aspects of technology such as computer-aided design and drafting were also being prepared for implementation in 1992. Strong links were developed with TAFE, particularly in subjects which relate closely to the national modules being developed for the restructured metal trades industry.

Primary classroom

Mathematics

Mathematics aims to develop in students the skills of numeracy, analysis and problem solving. The draft *ACT Mathematics Curriculum Framework*, based on the *National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools*, was trialled extensively across the government system in years 1–10. The draft framework included the eight curriculum components identified by the national statement—number, measurement, space, patterns/relationships/algebra, attitudes and appreciation, mathematical inquiry, chance and data, and choosing and using mathematics.

The Board of Senior Secondary Studies endorsed the *National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools* as a resource for course developers in secondary colleges. Teachers in ACT schools were involved in consultation concerning the development of mathematics profiles and the collection of exemplary student materials as part of an ongoing national collaborative curriculum project. By 1993 all government schools in the ACT are expected to be using the mathematics profile to monitor the achievements of student outcomes.

Professional development was offered to schools, clusters and regions in the area of learning and teaching in mathematics. The Mathematics Inservice Network Course (MINC) and the Mathematics Inservice for Secondary Teachers (MIST), both of which were developed in the ACT, were fully subscribed to and ran over a period of six or seven weeks, with teachers attending one session per week. Overall, 90 teachers from 15 primary schools participated in four MINC sessions. In the secondary area 36 teachers (3 each from 12 separate high schools) participated in MIST. Three high school mathematics faculties were involved in whole-day sessions on the implementation of the mathematics framework prior to the development of their mathematics courses and 25 college teachers participated in a two-day session on problem solving and mathematic modelling.

Studies of society and the environment

Studies of society and the environment aims to develop students' ability to investigate the historical, cultural, social and environmental factors that shape their identity and that of society and to participate effectively and responsibly in society.

In 1991 the draft *ACT Social Education Framework* was trialled in government primary and high schools. Major professional development programs, for the whole staff at primary schools and faculties at high schools, were provided to assist schools implementing the framework. This comprised a nine-workshop professional development package based on the *ACT Social Education Framework*, contemporary thinking and good teaching practice in this area of learning.

In 1991 specific courses were run centrally and at the school level involving 120 teachers. Other courses which took place included professional development on the *ACT Social Education Framework* for schools and faculties and curriculum coordinators, with 317 teachers taking part in these sessions. Further professional development in 1991 featured an emphasis on cooperation and team learning.

In addition to these in-services, social education teachers are well served by a wide range of professional associations including the ACT History Teachers Association, ACT Social Education Association, Canberra Commercial Teachers' Association, Geography Teachers' Association of the ACT, and Behavioural Science Teachers' Association (ACT). In 1991 these associations offered a range of in-services, seminars, conferences, meetings, public lectures, field trips and publications to their members. Over 650 teachers took part in activities organised by the various associations.

The arts

The arts curriculum aims to develop in students an appreciation and understanding of, and confidence to participate in, the creative arts. In 1991 the department provided high-quality curriculum service in the arts through the development of five curriculum frameworks in dance, drama, media, music and visual arts and design.

The arts professional development program assisted with the implementation of frameworks into schools' curriculum through the development of booklets such as *The Arts in Education*, and other resource materials. The full arts professional development program, which runs for 21 hours, was delivered in six schools as part of a continuing professional development program for teachers of the arts. This program was also run twice centrally. Eight other programs, focusing on across-curriculum perspectives, such as the Arts and the Environment and the Arts and Early Childhood, were also centrally run. In after-hours courses 20 schools received 'one-off' offerings and 15 centrally run workshops were delivered in specific arts areas. At least 600 teachers were professionally developed through these courses. Contributions were made to curriculum development and the Arts National Curriculum Project.

Many systemwide projects such as exhibitions, theatre-in-education, festivals and performances also supported the arts in schools in 1991. These included the annual Young Composers' Music Festival and the annual Canberra Milk Dance Festival. The Jigsaw Theatre-in-Education company provided schools with high-quality theatre on a range of across-curriculum themes such as social justice, the environment and multiculturalism. The Music Literacy Education Program, operated jointly by the department and the Canberra School of Music at two primary schools, was extended to their feeder high school so that participating students were able to continue with the program. The opportunity was provided for other high school students to take part in the program. Students from government and non-government high schools and secondary colleges participated in the 1991 Schools Shakespeare Festival coordinated by the Catholic Education Office. Representatives from the ACT participated in the national Shakespeare festival in Sydney.

Professional associations in the arts are very active in the ACT. The local Australian Association for Dance Education (AADE) promotes dance in schools through the provision of networking, resources, information, workshops and publications. The Music Teachers Association (MTA), Australian Society for Music Education (ASME), and Kodaly Music Education Institute of Australia (KMEIA) provide music teachers with support networks, forums for idea sharing, journals, newsletters, workshops, local and

national conferences. In 1991 the ACT Drama Association (ACTDA) ran a very successful national conference in Canberra, involving 240 participants from national and international drama associations. In 1991 the Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM) sponsored a media studies course, in conjunction with a commercial media training school, consisting of eight after-school sessions and culminating in a news simulation workshop. The workshop attracted 20 media teachers from across government school sectors.

Trumpet playing

Health

Health places emphasis on students' knowledge, physical skills and the development of values and attitudes needed to make informed decisions and act appropriately in a variety of situations. Health education encompasses health, personal development and physical education. In 1991 health education experienced extensive changes. *The ACT Health Education Curriculum Framework* was developed for use in schools in 1991. This framework is supported by the development of a health scope and sequence guide which assists teachers in the development of their health programs. Support was provided to schools through curriculum advice, resources, support and development of HIV/AIDS policy.

Professional development was provided for teachers implementing the health frameworks through a series of action research workshops at a regional level. School-based workshops have focused on the development of the whole person through extending current knowledge, understanding health processes and skill development. This focus assists individuals to make important health and lifestyle choices. The Health Education Professional Development (HEPD) course was conducted three times, consisting of a half-day session followed by six sessions of an hour and a half. Approximately 60 teachers attended these in-services. Workshops have been held in the area of safe behaviours, safe exercises, drug education, sexuality including HIV/AIDS and nutrition.

The introduction of many health projects, which have been funded externally, have provided a supporting role for teachers. One project, the national School Development in Health Education (SDHE) Project, was introduced in the Tuggeranong region in 1991. This project focuses on assisting teachers with their drug education programs through regional clusters.

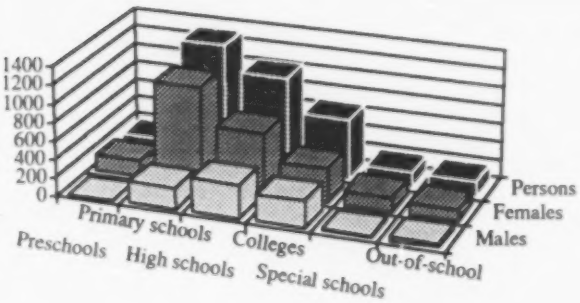
Girls and boys from government and non-government schools competed in a variety of sporting events at both zone and ACT level. The ACT Sports Council worked in close liaison with the primary and secondary school sporting associations in the selection of participants for the Pacific School Games.

Teaching and learning

Teaching profiles

Figure 12 shows the distribution of teaching staff in various sectors of ACT government education in 1991.

Figure 12. Teaching service staff, ACT government schools, July 1991



Source: ACT Department of Education

A profile of teachers in the Catholic system in 1991 shows the peak frequency age groups for the 322 female primary teachers was between 39 and 44. The second highest frequency was between 44 and 49. Of the 40 male teachers, the largest group was in the 29 to 34 age bracket. In the Catholic secondary sector the peak frequency for the 221 females was between 39 and 44, and between 29 and 34 for the 75 males.

In 1991 a shortage of teachers was experienced in ACT government schools in languages other than English, physics, business studies and accounting. In the special education field there was a continuing need for teachers in both the primary and secondary sectors, including behaviour management. Continued difficulty was experienced in recruiting suitably qualified school counsellors.

Assisting all students to realise their potential and develop fully as individuals and members of the broader community is the main goal of ACT teachers. To achieve this priority, in 1991 the following specific initiatives were undertaken to professionally develop teachers and improve the teaching and learning environment.

As part of the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning, five schools considered their workplace practices with regard to teacher productivity and student outcomes. This project has the aim of dealing with low teacher morale, reforming career pathways and improving the quality of teaching and learning. In 1991 these five ACT government schools (two primary, two high school and one college) planned pilot projects for implementation in 1992 as part of the National Schools Project. This will involve changes to classroom practice and changes in the way the work of students and teachers is organised and managed.

In the ACT Catholic system, two major programs for the development of teachers are the Quality in Teaching and Learning (QTL) Program and the Supervision for Effective Teaching (SET) Program. QTL utilises peer coaching as its fundamental process so that teachers receive the necessary training to be able to observe their peers during lessons and then provide them with positive feedback about particular areas of their teaching. SET enables participants to consider issues concerning teacher effectiveness, teacher quality and the supervision of teaching, within the context of shared professional development activity and the fostering of teacher collegiality.

In the government sector the department's Professional Development Section emphasised in-depth courses during 1991. Project TEACH (Teacher Effectiveness and Classroom Handling) ran over 45 hours involving approximately 60 teachers. Two regions participated in the Excellence in Teaching (ET) training for cluster groups of schools. The Australian Leadership, Assessment and Development Project was introduced into the ACT in 1988. This program is used to identify, evaluate and train key personnel for a leadership role in education. Data is gathered under controlled conditions where job-related tasks are performed. This data in turn is used to provide an in-depth analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the individual, which is linked to professional development and career planning. In 1991, four Assessment Centres were held for five college, seven high school and twelve primary school teachers at the substantive Deputy Principal level.

The O'Connell Education Centre Library served as an educational resource centre, departmental library and an input agency for ASCIS. This facility is used jointly by teachers from government and non-government schools who made up the 3,500 registered borrowers.

Another joint venture was the Birrigai Outdoor School which caters for ACT schools and for public groups at weekends and in school holidays. The facility was used by 11,000 students and 6,700 community group members in 1991.

Award restructuring

Award restructuring for teachers in the ACT was successfully negotiated in 1990–91 between employers and teachers' unions. Its implementation continued in 1991 with the introduction of the Advanced Skills Teacher 1 (AST 1) classification in government schools, where 793 applicants gained AST 1 status. In 1991 investigation of the AST 2 selection procedures and duty statements continued, and representatives of the ACT Department of Education participated in talks to investigate the establishment of a national system of teacher registration. Also, a Deputy Principal classification was created to provide organisational and administrative support to school principals and as a training ground for future principals. In 1991 salaries paid to principals and deputy principals were classified according to the enrolments of the school.

In ACT non-government schools most three-year and four-year trained teachers are at the top of the payment scale. Award restructuring for teachers in independent schools continued and 1991 saw the introduction of a single 11-point scale, the recognition of two-year trained teachers as being three-year trained, and preparation for the introduction of the AST 1 classification in 1992. Classroom teacher and promotional position salaries were increased to reflect the rate paid to government teachers in the ACT.

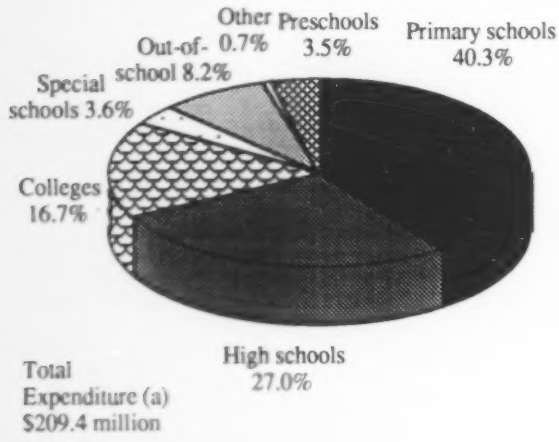
Probation

Probationary assessment procedures for government school teachers were modified in 1990 and worked smoothly in 1991. They provided a higher level of support and development for teachers new to the system than formerly. Responsibility for the probationary process moved from the Peer Assessment Unit to the regional school support centres. A total of 246 government school probationary teachers were assessed using these procedures in 1991.

Resourcing ACT schools

Competition for resources available under self-government had an impact on education during 1991 and many initiatives were introduced in an effort to reduce costs for the provision of schooling. Pressures on the department to reduce costs had led to an investigation of the viability of closing schools. The Schools Reshaping Project, initiated in the 1989–90 financial year by the Alliance Government, continued throughout 1990–91. Major community agitation at the proposal to close particular schools culminated in the commissioning of the Hudson Report to examine these proposals. Subsequently four primary schools were closed, one moved to a refurbished site, two twin-campus primary schools were initiated, and two high schools were linked to form one dual-campus school.

Figure 13. Expenditure, ACT government school system, 1990–91



(a) Includes ACT Public Works expenditure on schools.

Source: Derived from data for the NSSC

The report of the Preschool Advisory Task Force, issued in July 1990, suggested differing models for the restructuring of preschools for implementation or trialling in 1991. Subsequently the ACT government decided to co-locate six preschools and administratively link five with their local primary school. Two preschool districts began trialling a cluster model. Through preschool advisory groups, requests were being considered for more flexible hours, including extended preschool days.

The ACT government established a Schools Restructuring Task Force in 1991 to provide advice for the long-term development of the ACT government school system. The report of this group is expected to identify areas for improving the efficiency of schools.

The issue of school-based management was extensively examined during 1991. ACT schools already have a number of functions devolved to schools. These include responsibility for curriculum decision making, discretionary funding appropriations and self-management funds for building maintenance. A departmental working party examined the further devolution of various expenditure items to its schools.

Community use of government school buildings is a feature of school use which was fully developed in 1991. The concept of school centres was introduced in 1990. Under this policy particular schools were designated for community use. A consultant was engaged to identify all building costs involved. At schools other than nominated school centres, charges reflected full cost recovery. Some 13,000 bookings were made (including after-school child care) for the hire of school facilities by outside users. Costs for janitorial services were reduced by $90,000 as a result of the new school centre arrangements, and income from hiring increased by $90,000 to $525,000 for 1990–91.

A new government primary school opened in Theodore early in 1991. Planning for Bonython Primary School, which was to open in 1992, featured a design which can be converted to alternative uses when it is no longer required as a school.

Additional funding is available to resource schools identified as being in need. In the ACT two government primary schools and one non-government primary school participated in the Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) in 1991. Schools were selected for DSP funding on expressions of interest based on the socioeconomic background of the school and/or census information based on criteria such as educational standards of parents, proportion of ATSI residents in the population, levels of unemployment and number of NESB families. Specific programs undertaken in the ACT schools receiving DSP funding focused on developing skills in literacy and numeracy as well as building self-esteem.

Other areas/initiatives

Promotion of education

The ACT Government took an active role in the promotion of education and training services in Canberra and the surrounding areas of NSW. This was one of eight industry sectors identified by the South East Economic Development Council as offering potential for growth in the regional economy. Its promotion was being coordinated by the International Education Working Group, which was established by the Council in September 1991 and serviced by the ACT Department of Education. A working group comprising representatives of all sectors of education and training in the Canberra region, including higher education, government and non-government schools, TAFE and other vocational training bodies will undertake initiatives such as production of a cooperative marketing brochure on study in Canberra and the establishment of a cooperative marketing group.

School programs

The Police in Schools Project operated at two high schools with a police officer based at each school working with students in the high school and its feeder primary schools. The aim of this program was to improve relationships between young people and the police.

The Full-Fee Paying Overseas Students Program in ACT government schools more than doubled from 1990 to 1991. A total of 108 students were enrolled in government schools and 19 students were enrolled in non-government school.

COMMONWEALTH

The Commonwealth has a key role in addressing national priorities for Australian schools and in facilitating cooperative efforts among Australian educational authorities. It also has an ongoing interest in the outcomes of schooling, particularly in relation to the well-being of Australia's young people, the nature of Australian society and the achievement of national economic and social goals.

Commonwealth involvement in schooling

The responsibility for education in Australia is shared between the Commonwealth, the States and non-government systems and schools. Recognising that the States and non-government education systems and schools have prime responsibility for the delivery of education services, the Commonwealth seeks to work cooperatively with them in striving to improve the quality, relevance and effectiveness of schooling across Australia.

Within the context of the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia, the Commonwealth assists all Australian schools to improve the quality of educational services provided to students at all levels.

The Commonwealth's key objective in schooling is, in cooperation with the government and non-government education authorities, to provide the nation's young people with an education and training foundation which will:

- help them develop their full potential;
- prepare them for participation in Australian society;
- equip them to pursue post-school qualifications and employment opportunities.

As part of its assistance to schools, the Commonwealth provides funds for a wide variety of programs, namely:

- general recurrent grants to assist with ongoing costs;
- capital grants to assist in the provision of school facilities;
- targeted programs designed to assist schools and students with special needs;
- grants to promote collaborative activities among educational authorities in areas of national educational importance.

The Commonwealth also provides financial assistance directly to individual students and their families through the following schemes:

- AUSTUDY for financially disadvantaged secondary students;
- ABSTUDY for students of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin;
- Assistance for Isolated Children who live in remote areas.

The Commonwealth's policies and programs for schools and students are administered through the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET).

The Schools Council of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) provides information and advice to the board and hence to the Commonwealth Government on primary and secondary education in Australian schools.

Major developments during 1991

The Commonwealth introduced a range of important initiatives related to schooling during 1991. A significant event was the release of the White Paper which outlined a new Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP). Some of the changes resulting from this policy include:

- the new School Language and Literacy Program, which replaces three existing programs from 1992: the Ethnic Schools Program, the Literacy and Learning Program (which was introduced in 1991) and the Australian Second Language Program;
- establishment of the Asia Education Foundation to promote the study of Asia in Australian schools;
- establishment of the Australian Language Learning and Literacy Council as part of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training.

During 1991 the Commonwealth also introduced new programs as well as measures to enhance or extend existing programs. These included:

- establishment of the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning as a cooperative venture of the Commonwealth, States and Territories, independent teacher employers, teacher unions and the ACTU to support award restructuring in the teaching profession and improve the quality of teaching and, hence, student learning outcomes in Australian schools;
- introduction of the Award Restructuring Assistance Program (ARAP), through which the Commonwealth assists government and non-government school authorities by meeting its share of the additional costs resulting from teacher award restructuring;
- introduction of the Good Schools Strategy, which is aimed at improving the quality of school education and investigating how schools can improve their performance;
- enhancements to the Youth Social Justice Strategy, including the introduction of Youth Strategy Action Grants and improved provision of information to students relating to employment, education and training;
- introduction of the Secondary Support element of the Capital Grants Program for a two-year period to assist schools meet the demands resulting from increases in school retention rates;
- introduction of a Students with Disabilities element as part of the General Recurrent Grants Program;
- increased funding for the Country Areas Program;
- formation of a Schools Council Taskforce to consider the possible broadbanding of the targeted programs;
- commencement of an independent evaluation of the Students At Risk Program and announcement of an extension of the program into 1992.

Another area in which the Commonwealth played a leading role during 1991 was the follow-up to the Finn Report, *Young People's Participation in Post-compulsory Education and Training*. Following broad endorsement by ministers of the Finn Report recommendations, the Mayer Committee was established in order to develop the key competencies identified in the Finn Report. These developments are reported in more detail in the national overview chapter.

The Employment and Skills Formation Council (ESFC) of NBEET was separately requested to develop advice on the establishment of a new integrated entry-level training system for Australia. ESFC proposed a national training system which emphasised close cooperation between selected schools and training providers to deliver, inter alia, upper secondary vocational training. The ESFC report is to be considered by the AEC and the Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET) during 1992.

Other activities undertaken by the Commonwealth during 1991 were an evaluation of the Capital Grants Program, a separate review of the non-government elements of the program, and a major review of AUSTUDY.

Social justice initiatives

As part of its Youth Strategy, the Government introduced the Youth Social Justice Strategy in 1989. One of the aims of the strategy is to encourage greater participation by young people in post-compulsory schooling.

During 1991 a range of enhancements to the strategy were announced, including:

- a reorientation of the School Liaison Program to provide a coordinated careers and occupational information service to all schools and targeted assistance to disadvantaged and 'at risk' students;
- an expansion of the Rural Youth Information Service, which provides information on employment, education and training opportunities to young people and schools in rural and remote areas. Of particular concern are disadvantaged students, students at risk and those in rural and remote areas;
- introduction of Youth Strategy Action Grants in 1991–92 to target areas of high need, including students who are potential early school leavers. Funding of $1 million will be provided during 1991–92;
- establishment of a highly innovative 'Business and Education in Partnership' project in South Australia which links schools, industry and business in curriculum development;
- further funding of the Students at Risk Program, as described on page 179.

The Schools Council released a report, *Social Infrastructure and Social Justice: Resources in Australia's Disadvantaged Schools*, which examined the impact of increased student retention on the provision of buildings and equipment at years 11 and 12. The council also continued work on a proposed *Social Justice Statement*, which, among other issues, will explore the specific relevance of social justice concepts to schools and their operations.

During 1991 the council released *The Early Years of Schooling*, the first of a series of publications resulting from a major project on the compulsory years of schooling.

Further titles are planned for 1992.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

The national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP) was developed in order to integrate Commonwealth Aboriginal education endeavours with those of the main providers in the States and Territories. The AEP, which commenced in 1990, was endorsed by all Australian governments and the Aboriginal community.

Commonwealth Aboriginal education programs which contribute to the AEP include:

- Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness Program (ASSPA);
- Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program (AESIP);
- Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS);
- Vocational Educational Guidance for Aboriginals Scheme (VEGAS);
- Aboriginal Student Assistance Scheme (ABSTUDY)

AESIP funds measures that are specifically designed to supplement mainstream educational arrangements and implement the goals of the AEP. ASSPA aims to enhance educational opportunities for Aboriginal students in primary and secondary schools through the provision of funding for a variety of activities, including parental meetings and school student excursions. During 1991, ASSPA, which had been an element of AESIP, was established as a separate program.

ATAS provides tuition assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in primary, secondary and post-secondary education courses. VEGAS provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their parents with opportunities to investigate career and further education options. During 1991, ATAS and VEGAS, which had been elements of ABSTUDY (see section on income support on page 181), were inaugurated as programs in their own right.

A joint post-implementation review of ATAS and ASSPA and a separate review of AESIP will be undertaken during 1992. Results of the reviews are expected to provide the basis of a ministerial report later in 1992.

A number of projects of national significance relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education were initiated or continued during 1991. These included:

- development of nationally agreed philosophy and curriculum guidelines in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies;
- review and evaluation of current practices for teacher education and in-service provision for teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This will complement an additional project intended to identify components of current pre-service teacher education programs which prepare teachers for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- production of Unit Curriculum in core subjects for possible use in Aboriginal schools.

Reliable participation and retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are not yet available. However, 1990 and 1991 enrolment data suggest an increasing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are enrolling in senior secondary school (Table 1).

Table 1. Number of full-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior secondary students, 1990–91

	1990	*1991*
Year 10	4,162	4,557
Year 11	2,545	2,699
Year 12	1,471	1,717

Source: Statistical Annex, 1990 and 1991

Commonwealth programs for schools

The Commonwealth provides funding for a wide range of school programs at the primary and secondary level. The programs are closely linked with the Government's social justice policies, which are concerned with providing greater access to educational opportunities and services for disadvantaged groups and increasing their participation in schooling.

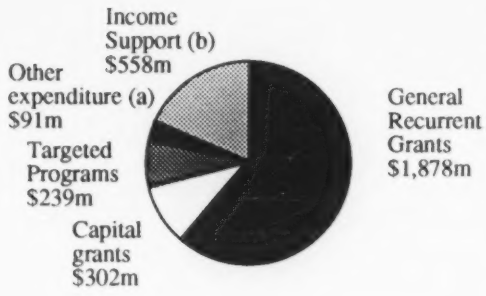
The bulk of Commonwealth expenditure for schools programs was allocated as general recurrent grants, with significant amounts being provided for capital grants, targeted programs and financial assistance to students (Figure 1).

Participation, retention and student competencies

General Recurrent Grants Program

In 1991 approximately $1.9 billion was provided to support the ongoing costs of Australian schooling, including teachers' salaries. Of this:

Figure 1. Commonwealth expenditure on schools and students, 1991



(a) Includes ethnic schools, education centres, award restructuring, projects of national significance, Australian Students Prize and short-term emergency assistance.

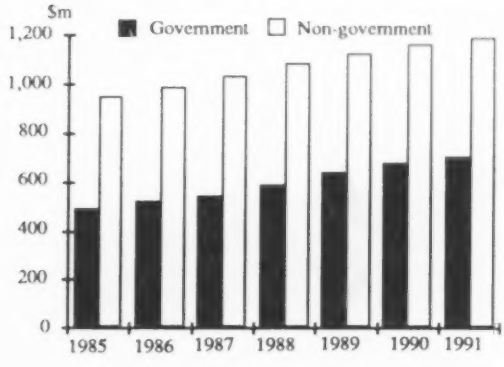
(b) Includes adult secondary AUSTUDY recipients

Source: Commonwealth DEET

- $704.8 million was provided for 1,345,516 primary and 886,284 secondary students in government schools;
- $1,173 million was provided for 449,945 primary and 402,629 secondary students in non-government schools.

Commonwealth grants to government and most non-government schools continued to increase in real terms, as part of an eight-year package (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Commonwealth general recurrent grants (a), 1985–91



(a) Estimated December 1991 prices

Source: Commonwealth DEET

Commonwealth general recurrent grants are provided to State government authorities under the tied grants power of the Constitution as funds for educational purposes. The grants are calculated on a per student basis. The per capita rates for government students in 1991 were $264 per primary school student and $391 per secondary school student.

The level of Commonwealth funding support for individual non-government schools is based on need, with schools being categorised into one of twelve funding categories (category 1 receiving the least financial support and category 12 the most). The largest portion of students were enrolled in category 10 schools which received $1,277 and $1,892 per primary and secondary student respectively. Of the 2,470 non-government schools receiving general recurrent funding, 1,812 were funded at category 10 or higher. These schools enrolled a total of 584,117 students out of the 852,234 students enrolled in all non-government schools.

Table 2. Non-government schools and students funded by the Commonwealth, 1985–91

Year	*Number of funded schools*	*Number of funded students*
1985	2,476	774,756
1986	2,457	793,051
1987	2,465	807,328
1988	2,474	822,019
1989	2,481	833,802
1990	2,473	843,370
1991	2,453	852,574

Source: Commonwealth DEET

In 1991 a new element of general recurrent grants was introduced for students with disabilities, with total funding of $4.7 million for the program year. Funding equal to 20 per cent of the per capita rate for government primary and secondary school students was provided for eligible students with disabilities. These additional funds were paid to government systems on the basis of enrolment data.

Non-government schools and systems which enrolled students with disabilities who met the eligibility criteria were eligible for funding at the category 12 rate for those students, regardless of the school's or system's funding category for its other students. The supplement to the per capita grant was the difference between the category 12 rate and the grants applicable to the school's or system's funding category.

Eligible non-government students are those attending non-government schools who have been assessed by people

with relevant qualifications as having intellectual, physical, social/emotional or multiple impairments at such level as would meet the criteria for enrolment in government special education services or programs and who are receiving a special education service or program. Students whose only impairment is a specific learning difficulty or for whom remedial education or remedial support is appropriate are not eligible.

Funding new non-government schools

Since 1985 the Commonwealth has agreed to fund 233 new non-government schools.

For 1991, 33 new schools with proposed enrolments of up to 12,365 students were approved for funding. Funding for a further 12 proposed new schools was not approved, mainly because the proposed new schools were not considered to be consistent with the planned provision of education in the proposed location. These new schools would be located in areas of significant enrolment decline and likely to have a detrimental impact upon the educational programs and services in existing government and non-government schools. Table 3 provides data on the outcomes of proposals for new schools in 1990 and 1991.

Table 3. Outcomes of the Commonwealth's New Schools Policy, 1990 and 1991

	1990		*1991*	
Type of proposal	*Proposed*	*Approved*	*Proposed*	*Approved*
Commencement	56	38	45	33
Extension of school years	29	24	28	16
Relocation of school	32	31	34	32
Other	63	48	66	57
Total	**180**	**141**	**173**	**138**

Commencements include existing non-government schools applying for Commonwealth assistance for the first time.

Source: Commonwealth DEET

Priority objectives for non-government schools

Approximately 800 non-government, mainly non-Catholic schools funded under the General Recurrent Grants Program provided information directly to the Commonwealth in relation to their objectives and strategies during 1991. This information was provided in relation to the Commonwealth's objectives for schools. However, for the purposes of the *National Report* it is presented in terms of the national goals. A number of schools also provided information on outcomes.

About half of these schools reported having objectives consistent with the national goal of providing an excellent education for all young people, developing their talents and capacities to the full. Strategies undertaken to implement this goal included maximising the competence, efficiency and confidence of teachers. Reported outcomes included a higher standard of planning and programming by teachers.

A number of schools implemented strategies consistent with the national goals of promoting equality of education opportunities and provision for groups with special learning requirements. Examples of strategies included providing places for students with disabilities and introduction of single-sex classes. Reported outcomes included progressive integration of disabled students into mainstream classes and an increased percentage of girls enrolled in mathematics and science-based subjects.

Schools also emphasised the development of skills specified in the national goals, including skills in literacy and numeracy and the development of knowledge of languages other than English. Some of the strategies employed included employing specialist teachers, making use of computer-assisted instruction, and instituting a 'mentor' system whereby mathematically talented students assist those with less skill. Positive outcomes in relation to mathematics included increased student understanding of mathematical concepts and an overall improvement on mathematics diagnostic tests.

In addition, half the schools emphasised the Commonwealth objective of providing better feedback to, and improved links with, the school community.

Capital Grants Program

The Capital Grants Program places emphasis upon improving educational outcomes in schools catering for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and other disadvantaged groups. As such, it plays an important role in the Government's Social Justice Strategy.

In 1991 the Commonwealth provided over $265 million under the General element of the Capital Grants Program. Of this:

- $197 million was provided to 548 government schools to improve school facilities for some 162,655 students (the average grant was $357,700);
- $68 million was provided to 197 non-government schools (from 497 applications), an average grant of $292,200 contributing towards an average project cost of $522,400;
- about 54 per cent of funds in government schools and 57 per cent in non-government schools were directed to upgrading facilities for existing student places, the remainder being used for the construction of facilities for new student places.

The Commonwealth also provided almost $2.9 million under the Hostels for Rural Students joint element of the program, to help rural school students complete their secondary education. Of the 21 applications considered, 13 were approved. The average grant was $127,425 towards an average project cost of $181,848. The approved projects created 118 new places and a further 48 existing places were refurbished.

During 1991 the Children with Disabilities element of the program was transferred to the Special Education Program and the Secondary Support element was introduced for a two-year period to assist schools to meet the pressures on school facilities resulting from recent improvements in school retention rates. More than $34 million was provided under the Secondary Support element in 1991 to assist 147 government and non-government schools, with an average grant of $250,000.

Evaluation of the Capital Grants Program

During 1991 an evaluation of the Capital Grants Program was undertaken. Two questions provided the focus for the evaluation:

- What kinds of projects were funded (during 1989–90)?
- To what degree were they congruent with the objectives of the program?

The guidelines for the program allow for a wide range of facilities to be funded and the evaluation found that this had occurred. The program was found to be fulfilling its role as an important supplementary source of funding for schools catering for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, while the States and non-government authorities continue to have primary responsibility for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of schools.

Most projects are meeting basic enrolment, upgrading or curriculum needs with facilities that enable a school to carry on its programs consistent with global area guidelines.

The aim of the program is to increase the participation and achievement of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds in schooling. To the extent that physical facilities can do this, the program is succeeding.

At the school level, the program was found to have a significant impact. Among school principals and other senior staff interviewed in 50 schools across Australia there was widespread support for the program. Increases in teacher and student morale, expanded curriculum options for girls and other disadvantaged groups, more relevant curricula, and more comfortable and efficient work environments were outcomes consistently described by respondents.

Review of the Capital Grants Program

The non-government General, Secondary Support and Hostels for Rural Students elements of the Capital Grants Program were the subject of a separate review during 1991. It was undertaken in order to assess the future level of capital funding for non-government schools and to develop ways to maximise the effectiveness of program delivery. The impact of additional provision for Aboriginal education under the Aboriginal Education Policy, as well as implications of the Finn Report, were considered also.

A discussion paper outlining major issues and suggesting future directions was prepared and circulated widely for comment, following extensive consultation with non-government authorities. Final decisions arising from the review will be reported in the 1992 *National Report*.

Projects of National Significance

The Projects of National Significance (PNS) Program allocated over $2 million in 1991 to assist in innovation, development and promotion of quality education at the primary and secondary levels. Major areas of activity are outlined below.

Curriculum and assessment

The Commonwealth continued to invest considerable resources to support national collaboration in curriculum development through preparation of national statements and subject profiles across the eight key areas of learning. Several projects were implemented during 1991, including:

- projects to facilitate community awareness of the *National Report* and broaden knowledge and participation in curriculum development at the national level;
- Commonwealth contribution to the development of subject profiles for mathematics and English;
- development of a national analytical and reporting framework for the outcomes of schooling for young people;
- investigation of equity issues in patterns of student performance in selected subjects at the senior secondary level;
- assistance with development and implementation of sports education.

Participation and access

A number of projects were undertaken to encourage greater participation by girls and improve access for disadvantaged groups:

- investigation of upper secondary enrolment rates (years 10, 11 and 12) and year 12 achievement for boys and girls;
- three projects relating to curricula and teacher pre-service and in-service training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education;

- a study undertaken by the Smith Family aimed at developing a more coordinated approach by non-government agencies to the delivery of educational services to the disadvantaged.

Mathematics and science

A number of initiatives to increase student participation in mathematics and science were supported:

- an exchange program for Australian and United Kingdom science teachers to raise the profile of science teaching;
- support to widen participation of Australian students in mathematics, physics and chemistry as well as widen participation in the National Mathematics Summer School;
- publication and dissemination of Australian material in the Career Oriented Modules to Explore Technology and Science (COMETS) format.

Teacher quality

Projects designed to improve teacher quality ($165,000) included:

- evaluation of the effectiveness of fourth-year full-time training for student teachers and additional professional preparation for newly qualified teachers;
- identification of priorities for professional development of school principals.

Additional projects included:

- examination of links between schools and industry;
- support for developing interest in the fine and performing arts;
- support for Australian Environment Awards for schools to increase student and community awareness.

Australian Students Prize

The Commonwealth introduced the Australian Students Prize to encourage excellence in education and to give public recognition and support for outstanding Australian students. The prize consists of a certificate of excellence and a cheque for $2,000 from the Commonwealth government.

Some 500 year 12 students across Australia received the Australian Students Prize in recognition of their outstanding level of achievement in 1991 senior secondary studies. Special recognition was also given to students who, as members of the Australian Olympiad teams, won medals in the International Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry Olympiads.

Evaluation and review

In order to satisfy the Commonwealth's requirement for accountability, selected schools which are funded through the Commonwealth's Schools Programs are involved in reviews or formal evaluations each year. These studies are wholly or partly funded by the Commonwealth. Studies begun or underway during 1991 (and not previously reported in the 1990 *National Report*) include:

- the evaluation of the Capital Grants Program and the separate review of selected elements of the program, referred on page 172;
- a study of mathematics assessment and reporting practices in selected schools, reported in the national overview chapter;
- a study of Information for Management, Planning and Review, Phase 1, reported in the national overview chapter;
- an evaluation of the Students at Risk Program.

The last study will be reported on in the 1992 *National Report*.

Outcomes and developments

National trends

The retention rate to year 12 is continuing to increase, from 60 per cent in 1989 to 71 per cent in 1991 (Table 4). This figure exceeds the Government's objective of a retention rate of 65 per cent by the early 1990s. Retention rates for the government and non-government sectors have both increased, and for the 1991 school year reached 67 per cent and 82 per cent, respectively.

Table 4. Apparent year 12 retention rates, 1989–91 (per cent)

Sector	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*
Government	54	58	67
Catholic	66	68	72
Other	98	100	101
Total non-government	*6*	*78*	*82*
Total	**60**	**64**	**71**

Source: *Statistical Annex*, 1990 and 1991

School age participation rates fall rapidly after compulsory schooling age, ranging in 1991 from 93 per cent for 15-year-olds to 57 per cent for 17-year-olds (Table 5). However, participation rates have increased from 44 per cent to 47 per cent over 1989–91 in line with increases in retention, with significant increases for 17- and 18-year-olds.

Table 5. Age participation rates, 1989–91 (per cent)

Age (in years)	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*
15	92	93	93
16	73	76	80
17	49	50	57
18	10	11	13
19	2	2	3
Total 15–19	**44**	**44**	**47**

Source: Statistical Annex, 1991

The Commonwealth's objectives for schooling emphasise the need to improve the participation of students who are disadvantaged as a consequence of ethnicity, Aboriginality, socioeconomic circumstances, geographic location or physical or intellectual disability. Information on participation is available for some of these groups (see section on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education).

Table 6 indicates the proportion of young people completing year 12 according to home location and socioeconomic status (SES). Overall the table shows that in 1991 approximately 69 per cent of young people completed year 12, a significant increase from 45 per cent in 1985. The proportion of students from urban areas who completed year 12 in 1991 (70 per cent) exceeded the proportion for those whose home is in a rural (68 per cent) or remote (52 per cent) location, although the magnitude of the difference between urban and rural has declined in recent years. Students from lower SES backgrounds continue to complete year 12 at a lower rate (61 per cent in 1991) than students from high SES backgrounds (80 per cent in 1991).

Table 6. Estimated year 12 completion rates by socioeconomic status and home location, 1985–91(per cent) (a)

	1985	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*
Low SES	39	49	52	53	53	61
High SES	58	68	73	72	70	80
Urban	47	58	61	62	63	70
Rural	40	53	57	58	60	68
Remote	36	44	48	47	47	52
Total	**45**	**56**	**59**	**60**	**61**	**69**

(a) ACT excluded for 1985–88. 1986 data not included as Victorian data is not available for that year.

Source: Statistical Annex, 1991

In relation to the Commonwealth's objective of maximising the competencies of students in key areas including mathematics, science and languages other than English, Table 7 shows that there has been a significant growth in enrolments in each of these areas. There has been a notable proportional growth in the study of mathematics and economics and business. The more detailed data provided in the *Statistical Annex* (Table 12) shows that the large growth in the 'other' category includes a six-fold increase in the number of students enrolled in computer studies. That table also shows that female students have increased their enrolments in all of the key areas and their proportional participation in mathematics, economics and business and computer studies.

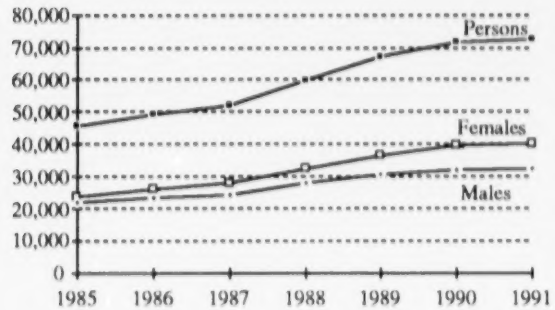
Table 7. Year 12 enrolments in tertiary accredited subjects, 1986 and 1991

	1986		*1991*	
	Number	*%*	*Number*	*%*
Science	129,507	26.8	164,182	23.9
Mathematics	104,199	21.6	169,882	24.7
Humanities and social sciences	102,435	21.2	122,139	17.8
Economics and business	63,389	13.1	99,204	14.4
Arts	28,941	6.0	43,224	6.3
Languages	5,966	3.3	20,414	3.0
Technical studies	9,012	1.9	14,370	2.1
Physical education	8,532	1.8	15,550	2.3
Other	21,346	4.4	38,822	5.6
Total	483,327	100.0	687,787	100.0

Source: Commonwealth DEET

An important concern of the Commonwealth is the continuation of school students on to higher education. In 1991, 72,400 year 12 students continued on to higher education, about the same as in 1990. As Figure 3 shows, the number of school leavers commencing higher education direct from school has increased quite significantly over the second half of the 1980s, although levelling off during 1990 and 1991. Figure 3 also shows that the number of female school leavers who continue on to higher education exceeds the number of males. School leavers who commenced higher education in 1991 represented a significant proportion of 1990 year 12 students (43 per cent).

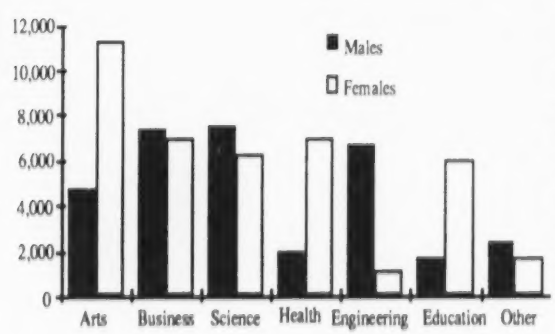
Figure 3. School leavers who continued on to higher education, Australia, 1985–91



Source: Commonwealth DEET

Most school leavers enrolled in arts, business and sciences (Figure 4). Nearly all school leavers (96 per cent) attended higher education on a full-time basis.

Figure 4. School leavers who continued on to higher education by gender and field of study



Source: Commonwealth DEET

In 1991, 33,590 year 12 students continued on to TAFE, a significant increase on 1990 (Table 8). The table also shows that in 1991 these students were evenly divided between males and females, and that part-time students continue to outnumber full-time students.

Table 8. Year 12 school leavers who continued on to TAFE, by gender and status, 1990–91

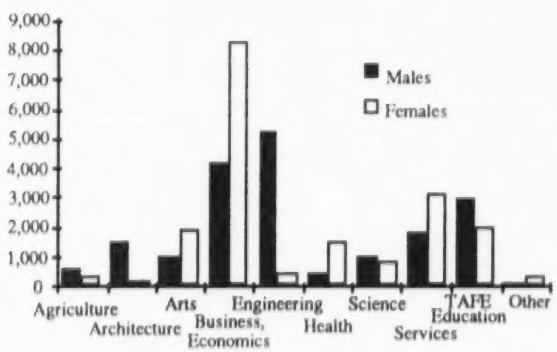
	1990(a)	*1991*
Males	14,060	16,820
Females	13,773	16,770
Full-time	10,526	13,842
Part-time	17,263	19,748
Total	**27,833**	**33,590**

(a) 1990 numbers for Queensland have been estimated, based on the distribution for 1991. As a result, number of full-time and part-time students differ slightly from total.

Source: National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd

Most of these TAFE students enrolled in business-related, engineering and services-related subjects in 1991 (Figure 5). There were significant differences in enrolments of male and female students across fields of study. Female students predominated in business and economics, arts, health and services while considerably more males were enrolled in engineering, agriculture and architecture.

Figure 5. Year 12 leavers who continued on to TAFE by gender and field of study, 1991



Source: Commonwealth DEET

The result of this educational activity is that Australia is gradually achieving a better educated workforce. This is shown in the increasing proportions of people who have attended the highest level of secondary school available and of those with post-school qualifications. In 1991, 48 per cent of the labour force had a post-school qualification compared to 39 per cent in 1981. Similarly, in 1991 15 per cent of the labour force had attended the highest level of secondary school available, compared with 12 per cent in 1981.

Retention measures for Tasmania (TASPACT)

As part of measures arising from the recommendations of the Commonwealth/State Task Force on Tasmania, the Commonwealth provided $2.6 million over the 1990–92 financial years for programs aimed at improving retention rates to years 11 and 12 and to tertiary institutions in Tasmania. Of this amount, $1.85 million was for student support such as purchase of properties for use as hostels, refurbishment of existing hostels and the establishment of a careers information database.

The sum of $750,000 was also allocated for research and action programs which are being undertaken by the Youth Education Studies Centre, University of Tasmania.

Areas of research in 1991 included:

- improved student performance and increased retention;
- improved access for disadvantaged groups to upper secondary and tertiary education.

Schools will be assisted with the development of action programs and evaluation methods during the year. The final report on this research is expected by the end of 1992.

International Educational Indicators Project

In association with other OECD nations, Australia has continued developing performance indicators for all education sectors and on the transition from education to the labour market. Australian involvement has concentrated on education, labour market entry, employment status, earnings, and expenditure on education. Participation in this project will provide improved internationally comparable data collection for economic, labour market and education statistics. Proposed OECD indicators which involve Australia are given in Figure 6.

All participating OECD countries have recently revised and updated their data in order to improve comparability. As a result, calculated indicators are now expected to be released in late 1992 in an OECD publication entitled *Education at a Glance*. This publication will present some thirty indicators, ranging from relatively traditional indicators of participation and cost to more experimental measures of the characteristics of decision making within the education system. These indicators will be reported in the 1992 *National Report*.

Figure 6. Proposed OECD indicators

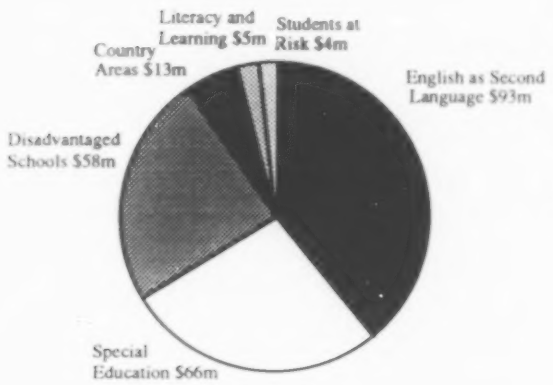
Costs and resources	*Student flows*	*Education & labour market destinations*
Education Expenditure relative to	**Participation in formal education**	**Educational attainment**
GDP	Upper secondary education	Population
Total public expenditure	Non-university tertiary education	Level
Level of education	Higher education (University)	Gender
	Science and engineering	
Sources of expenditure by	**Access**	**Unemployment**
Level of government	Tertiary entrance	School (pre-primary, lower and upper secondary)
Inter-governmental transfers		Higher education (university and non-university)
Expenditure	**Retention**	**Relative earnings**
Capital	Higher education survival	Education attainment levels
Current		
Teaching salaries		
Non-teaching wages		
Other expenditure		
Per capita expenditure	**Completion**	**Labour market**
Relative to per capita GDP	Upper secondary	Employment & unemployment rates
Primary students	Higher education graduation	Youth & population
Secondary students	Science and engineering graduates	Ratio pupil/teacher
		Labour force employed in education

Phase 3 of the OECD project will commence mid-1992. It aims to consolidate and extend existing indicators and to develop an appropriate strategy for presentation, dissemination and communication of the indicators.

Assistance for disadvantaged schools and students

The Commonwealth provided $239 million (Figure 7) in 1991 for targeted programs designed to improve the education participation and outcomes of young people disadvantaged by language, socioeconomic circumstances, geographical isolation or disabilities.

Figure 7. Commonwealth expenditure for targeted programs, Australia, 1991



Source: Commonwealth DEET

Special Education Program

Following extensive consultation, the Special Education Program (SEP) was reorganised with a reduction in program elements from five to three. The Commonwealth provided $65 million in 1991 for the following:

- Schools Support, which provides funds to assist in the provision of services for students with disabilities in government and non-government schools;
- Intervention Support, which supports education, therapeutic and other services essential for children with disabilities who are not enrolled at school. It also supports students in schools who require additional assistance to that provided under Schools Support;
- Capital Support, which assists schools and centres in the provision of capital facilities integral to programs for students with disabilities.

The effectiveness of the SEP will be evaluated during 1992 as part of a sample study on the provision of education for children with disabilities throughout Australia. The results of this sample study will be reported in the 1992 *National Report*.

Disadvantaged Schools Program

The Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) provides funds to support school-based programs aimed at improving participation, learning outcomes and personal development of disadvantaged young people. Projects were undertaken in areas such as literacy and numeracy, curriculum development, the development of skills to enable students to function effectively in society, pastoral care and school–community interaction.

In 1991, 2,002 disadvantaged schools received $58 million. Of these schools, 1631 were government schools and three-quarters were primary schools. A total of 502,705 students was assisted, 431,772 from government schools. A revised Index of Disadvantage was also introduced during 1991.

English as a Second Language Program

The Commonwealth provided $93 million in 1991 for the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program. It has two elements:

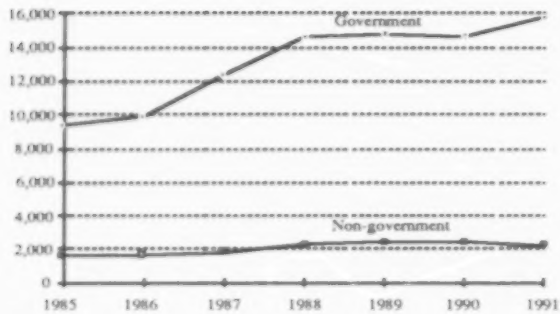
- the General Support element, which assists students of non-English speaking background (NESB) who can participate in mainstream classes but still require special assistance;
- the New Arrivals element, which provides a once-only per capita grant ($2,480 in 1991) to education authorities and schools in support of intensive English language programs for newly arrived students with little or no English skills. In 1991, 17,912 new arrivals were catered for in intensive classes, an increase of 5 per cent on 1990. This compares with 10,884 students assisted in 1985. Most of these were catered for in government schools and special language centres (Figure 8).

An extensive evaluation of the ESL Program was reported in the 1990 *National Report*.

Work was undertaken in 1991 to revise the Index used to allocate General Support funds between the States and systems. This is expected to be completed during 1992.

In 1991 funds were also provided under the above three programs to independent systemic schools including the Seventh Day Adventist Schools and the Swan Christian Schools in Western Australia. These schools directed DSP funds towards developing the language and literacy skills of students and towards purchasing computer equipment while ESL funds were used to employ specialist ESL teachers. The integration of children with disabilities into

Figure 8. Number of students assisted under the ESL New Arrivals Program by sector, Australia, 1985–91



Source: Commonwealth DEET

mainstream classes was aided by SEP funds, which permitted the employment of specialist teachers or teacher aides.

Country Areas Program

The Country Areas Program (CAP) assists school communities to improve the delivery of educational services in prescribed country areas. In 1991 there were 51 such areas across Australia, involving 1,216 schools (including 137 non-government schools), of which 73 per cent were primary schools. About 150,000 students (14,500 from non-government schools) were eligible for assistance under the program.

The Commonwealth provided $13 million for the CAP in 1991. These funds were used for a number of purposes, including development and extension of curriculum programs; involvement of local people, industries and resources in school programs; and assistance in community-based programs designed to enrich the cultural, social and recreational life of country students. CAP has very strong support in rural communities.

In 1991 the Commonwealth announced that it will provide additional CAP funding of $3.2 million for each of the years 1992, 1993 and 1994, to be indexed. Funding under the CAP extension will support initiatives to encourage young people in rural areas to complete year 12, improve levels of student achievement and reduce incidence of gender bias in student subject choice and will focus on students from a low socioeconomic background.

Work was undertaken in 1991 to revise the index used to allocate CAP funds between the States. This is expected to be completed during 1992.

Literacy and Learning Program

The Literacy and Learning Program (LLP) was introduced in 1991. It was intended to improve literacy and learning for students attending disadvantaged schools. The Commonwealth provided $5.3 million in 1991 for the following elements:

- the National element, which provided $1 million for five major cross-State/system collaborative projects to enhance the quality of teaching in relation to the use of language in major subject areas at the junior secondary level;
- the General element which provided $4 million for a variety of purposes associated with developing or extending targeted professional development programs and delivering them to teaching staff.

As a result of the Australian Language and Literacy Policy, the LLP will be replaced by the School Language and Literacy Program (SLLP) from 1992. The new program will include four elements:

- the Literacy and Learning General element (the 1991 LLP General element renamed);
- the Literacy and Learning National element, which will replace the 1991 LLP National element. This element will foster the development of language, literacy and learning in the early years of schooling (K–3);
- the Community Languages element, which replaces the Ethnic Schools Program (see page 179);
- the Priority Languages Incentive element, which will provide support for the provision of courses of studies in languages other than English.

The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP), which was released as a White Paper during 1991, addressed Australia's needs in the areas of literacy in English, languages other than English, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and language services.

The ALLP has resulted in important changes to Commonwealth programs, most of which are detailed elsewhere. Additional changes include:

- establishment of the Australian Language and Literacy Council as part of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training;
- establishment of a research network for child literacy and English as a Second Language by the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia;
- provision of funds to the Australian Literacy Federation to support the implementation of teacher development activities in line with the national statement on English for schools.

Students at Risk Program

The Students at Risk (STAR) Program is aimed at improving participation in education for especially disadvantaged young people. It was introduced in 1989 as an element of the Youth Social Justice Strategy for young Australians and was intended to operate over 1990 and 1991.

The program has been extended for 1992 with future funding dependent upon an independent evaluation of the program being undertaken during 1991–92 as well as the findings from the report of the task force considering the possible broadbanding of the targeted programs. The task force findings will be submitted during 1992.

In 1991, funds totalling $4.3 million were provided for the States to undertake a range of projects. The program operated in more than 400 schools. Projects included:

- a range of in-service strategies to support continued involvement of young people in mainstream education;
- strengthening of home–school relations through greater involvement of and feedback to parents of students at risk;
- development of screening strategies so that 'at risk' students can be better identified;
- development of more flexible arrangements such as easier exit and re-entry policies and combinations of part-time work and part-time study;
- development of enterprise skills through school-based (and some community-based) activities.

During 1991 the Schools Council was asked to advise on a possible Commonwealth broadbanded equity program for schools. The programs to be considered for broadbanding include Special Education, Disadvantaged Schools, Students at Risk, English as a Second Language, Country Areas and Hostels for Rural Students.

A task force, chaired by the Schools Council, has been established to carry out this task, with representation from two government education systems, DEET and the Schools Council. Following Australia-wide consultations with school authorities and interest groups, the task force will report in mid-1992.

Language studies

The Commonwealth encouraged the study of languages and cultures of other societies through the following programs:

- Ethnic Schools Program;
- Australian Second Language Learning Program;
- Asian Languages and Studies Program.

These programs were aimed at contributing to a more aware and integrated society with skills to support realisation of Australia's trading potential.

Ethnic Schools Program

This program was established to assist ethnic community organisations to provide language and cultural classes relevant to their communities. In 1991 funding of approximately $7 million was provided. Forty-five languages were covered with 189,500 funded enrolments. Some 135,000 enrolments were for classes operating in regular school time.

A review of the Ethnic Schools Program was undertaken during 1991 as part of the development of an overall language and literacy policy for Australia. As a result of this review, the program has been replaced by the Community Languages element (CLE) of the School Language and Literacy Program (see page 178).

The CLE will provide funding to host school systems and State Governments to assist with recurrent expenditure on community languages. Community languages will include Aboriginal languages or the first language of people who have migrated to Australia (not including English). Language courses may be conducted in institutions other than schools.

Australian Second Language Learning Program

The Australian Second Language Learning Program (ASLLP) provided funds to improve and extend second language learning. It consists of two elements:

- a General element, which supported initiatives by school systems;
- a National element, which supported Projects of National Signifigance.

As a result of the Australian Language and Literacy Policy, the ASLLP will be replaced in 1992 by the Priority Languages Incentive element of the School Language and Literacy Program (referred to on page 178). The new element will seek to encourage an increase in the number of students studying priority languages other than English at year 12. State and Territory ministers for education will declare eight priority languages from a list of 14 (which includes Aboriginal languages, Arabic and selected Asian and European languages).

Grants will be paid for year 12 students (up to a ceiling) in government and non-government schools studying a priority language. Total funding for 1992 is estimated at $6 million, approximately equal to 1991 funding for the General element of the ASLLP.

Asian languages and studies

The Commonwealth continues to support the teaching of Asian languages and studies in recognition of the importance it places on Australia's relationship with its Asian-Pacific neighbours. Among the activities in 1991 were:

- the continued development of national curricula and materials in Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese and Thai;
- continued funding of Asian Studies programs in the fields of geography, history, economics and politics.

The Australian Language and Literacy Policy announced the establishment of an Asia Education Foundation to promote the study of Asia in Australian schools. The foundation will coordinate the national effort to raise awareness of the importance of Asia-literacy for all Australians and will address the need for the curriculum and related research materials for schools to include an appropriate focus on Asian topics across all aspects of the curriculum. Also announced were scholarships for language teachers to undertake research/studies in Asian countries.

Teaching and curriculum policy

The Commonwealth aims to enhance the educational services in government and non-government schools by promoting the development of national collaborative curriculum frameworks and profiles and the professional competence of teachers. It facilitates the overall national schools strategy and assists in the provision of quality education services, including support for education centres and the Curriculum Corporation.

National collaboration in curriculum

Considerable progress was made on national collaborative curriculum collaboration work during 1991, as described in the national overview chapter.

The Commonwealth invested considerable resources in support of national collaboration in curriculum and profile development during 1991. This involved:

- providing 50 per cent of the costs of national collaborative curriculum projects in science, technology, English and studies of society and environment;
- participation in meetings of Directors of Curriculum and the Australasian Co-operative Assessment Program. These bodies were replaced in 1991 by the AEC Curriculum and Assessment Committee (CURASS);
- participating in steering committees and system network groups (previously called national reference groups for collaborative curriculum and assessment projects);
- consultation with peak national bodies, Commonwealth departments and other agencies;
- funding a number of peak teacher organisations (e.g. the Australian Literacy Federation) to contribute to the development of the national curriculum statements and to promote and disseminate the statements through professional development activities;
- funding the appointment of gender equity curriculum consultants to each of the curriculum project teams.

Commonwealth activities related to the development and publication of curriculum material, as well as collaborative projects with States and Territories, are undertaken through the Curriculum Corporation. The Commonwealth contributes a core fee on an annual basis to the Corporation along with other member States and Territories. It is also providing the Corporation with an establishment grant of $1.4 million in 1991–92, which includes part of the Commonwealth contribution for national collaborative curriculum work ($639,500). The establishment grants will cease after 1993–94.

Of particular importance to the Commonwealth was work relating to Aboriginal studies. During 1991 the AEC agreed to secure Aboriginal studies within the national curriculum statement and subject profiles for studies of society and environment. The Commonwealth is funding a series of projects in 1991 and 1992 to develop, inter alia, nationally agreed guidelines in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders studies. The principles and perspectives of the guidelines will be incorporated into the studies of society and the environment national statement as well as into national statements and profiles for other learning areas as appropriate, e.g. arts and health. These projects form one element of the program of reconciliation with the Aboriginal people being undertaken by the Commonwealth Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

Assessment at year 12

During 1990 the Commonwealth supported the Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA) in a national project to map year 12 certificates and statements of achievement awarded to Australian students. The AEC subsequently agreed to an extension of the project to include comparisons of year 12 (aggregate) scores used for entry to higher education. Additional work for the project (now entitled 'The Use of Year 12 Assessment Data for Higher Education Entry') is being undertaken by ACACA in close consultation with the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and the Tertiary Admission Centres. A report on results of this project will be provided in the 1992 *National Report*.

National Policy for the Education of Girls

During 1991 the Commonwealth continued its strong commitment to implementing the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian schools in cooperation with State and Territory governments and major non-government bodies.

Innovative projects funded through the Commonwealth's Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project in 1991 included:

- school-based research about the ways in which the teaching of English in schools impacts on girls;
- development of gender-inclusive curriculum units for primary schools;
- development of recommendations to inform teaching practice in addressing the construction of gender.

In addition, a project consultant was appointed to ensure consistency and coordination at a theoretical level through the development of the project. The Government also announced in 1991 that $1 million will be made available during 1992–93 for the development of curriculum materials dealing specifically with gender inequity and violence against women.

The Commonwealth continued to support the GEN newsletter during 1991. The aim of the GEN is to promote the national policy and its strategies, including to those not normally concerned with gender-equity issues. Distribution of the newsletter reached 20,000 per month during 1991.

A review of the national policy was begun in 1991 under the aegis of the AEC. An AEC working party is evaluating the appropriateness of the policy's objectives and priorities as well as the effectiveness of their implementation. In addition, student subject choice at years 11 and 12 is being investigated to inform the review. The review will be finalised in 1992 and will determine the direction of policy for the next five years. The results will be reported in the 1992 *National Report*.

Quality of teaching

National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning

The National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL) was initiated by the Commonwealth and established as a cooperative endeavour of teacher unions and employers to support award restructuring in the teaching profession. The project has been in operation since February 1991 and will continue until the end of 1993. Its purpose is to develop a set of nationally consistent strategies intended to improve the quality of teaching and, hence, current learning outcomes in Australian schools, on the premise that education plays a fundamental role in strengthening the skill base of Australia's population to support a more competitive economy. (Further material on the project is contained in the national overview chapter.)

The NPQTL is directed by a Governing Board, chaired by the Commonwealth and with representatives from the States and Territories, independent employers of teachers, teacher unions and the ACTU.

Teacher award restructuring

During 1991 the Commonwealth provided $78 million for the first year of operation of the Commonwealth's Award Restructuring Assistance Program (ARAP). Through this program, the Commonwealth assists government and non-government authorities by meeting its share of the additional costs resulting from teacher award restructuring.

The Commonwealth continued to participate in the Standing Committee of the Conference of Ministers on Teacher Employment (SCOTCOM). This committee's work contributed to greater national consistency in teacher award provision.

Good Schools Strategy

The Good Schools Strategy is aimed at improving the quality of school education. It involves an initial project designed to inform and stimulate discussion about what makes a good school. This will be supplemented by school-based projects which address school improvement strategies in the following three priority areas: educational leadership; school organisation; and student welfare, behaviour and discipline.

The strategy was announced in 1991 after endorsement by the AEC and has been allocated some $10 million over three years. The first report is expected in 1992.

Education Centres Program

Education centres are autonomous bodies which contribute to improving the quality of schooling through curriculum and professional development activities, training and skills development in the community and encouraging the active collaboration of parents and the community in school improvement activities. Centres are also involved in promoting national education priorities at the local and regional level.

Centres are managed through local committees, most of the members of which must be teachers. Funding in 1991 was $2 million with grants provided for 23 centres in metropolitan and rural locations throughout Australia.

Income support for students

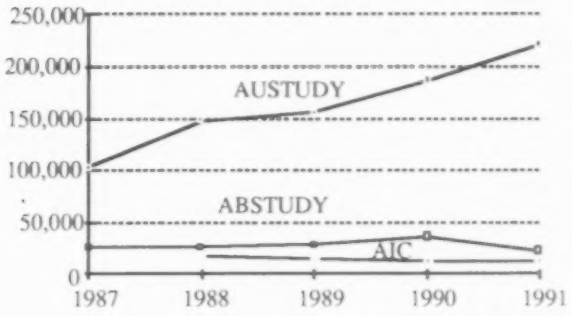
As part of its Social Justice Strategy and to increase participation in education and training among targeted groups, the Commonwealth provides financial assistance directly to disadvantaged students and their families through three schemes:

- ABSTUDY (Schooling), which encourages all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities at secondary school that are available to all other Australian students;
- AUSTUDY (Secondary), which helps students who are 16 years of age and over or who, if homeless, have reached minimum school leaving age;
- Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme, which gives financial help to the families of children who, because of

geographical isolation or disability, must live away from home to attend school, study by correspondence or live in a second family to attend school.

As shown in Figure 9, the number of AUSTUDY recipients continued to increase in 1991. The number of ABSTUDY and AIC students has remained generally constant over the period 1988–91.

Figure 9. School students who received Commonwealth income support, by type of assistance, Australia, 1987–91



Source: Commonwealth DEET

A major review of AUSTUDY was undertaken during 1991 as part of a more general review of student income support. The terms of reference for the review were to address:

- the appropriateness of the objectives of student income support;
- advantages and disadvantages of the current scheme and alternative or modified schemes, including:
  - –equity and access issues;
  - –costs to government;
  - –administrative aspects of the current or modified schemes.

The final report will be released during 1992 and reported on in the 1992 *National Report*.